nemo

the classic comics library

No. 4
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Adventure Issue!

FLASH GORDON

Dan Barry's exciting
science-fiction adventure strip with
work by Harvey Kurtzman & Frank Frazetta!

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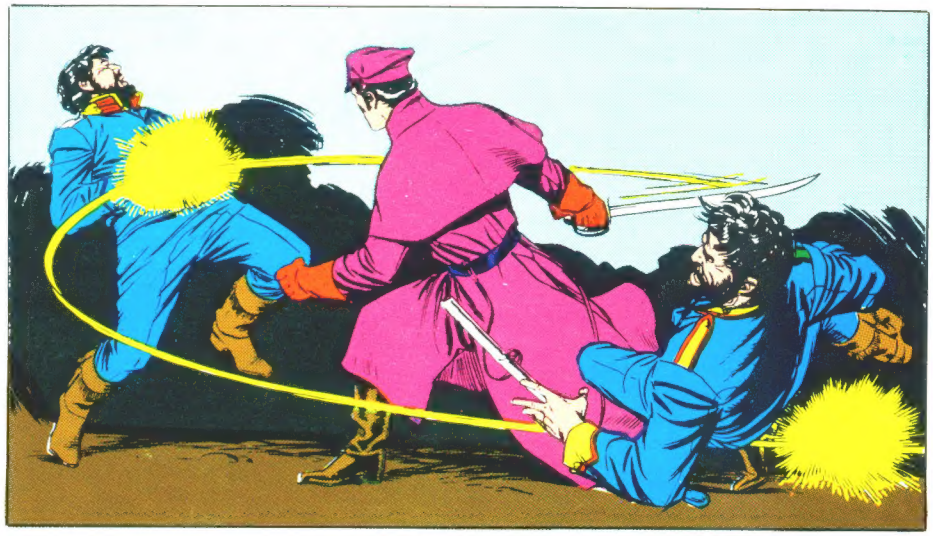
Adventure Strip
Pioneer:
George Storm's Creations!



The Fantastic Western Art of Warren Tufts:
A Portfolio of "Lance" Pages from the '50s!
(With an Introduction by Tufts's Former Assistant, ALEX TOTH)

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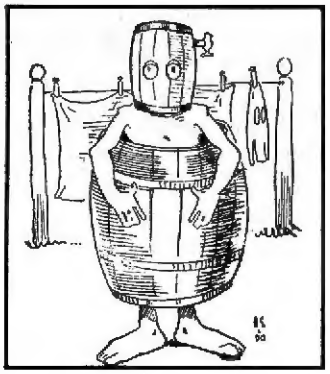
At the age of 84, Allen Saunders has had a fascinating career. In this issue begins his warm, nostalgic, informative autobiography ...exclusively for *NEMO*.



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Editorial:

Hard Choices And Soft Answers

Out of the midst of a universal, shrill, and fulsome symphony of Whistles in the Graveyard comes a new, unfamiliar tune.

The graveyard is the reality that newspaper comics, particularly Sunday newspaper comics, are in some degree of trouble. The whistling is the party line of industry folk who feverishly point to charts and graphs to say it ain't so. Outside the graveyard walls there has been a chorus of nay-sayers who see things differently, who are afraid for the future of newspaper strips. We must hasten to add that without exception those who speak of gloom in connection with newspaper comics and their future are absolutely devoted to the form, its history, its exponents, and its potential: We must recognize that it is not antagonism but enthusiasm that informs our drive. Those who shepherd the comics, on the other hand, often operate from an indifference that translates functionally to antagonism.

That new tune (to continue our analogy) in the graveyard, somewhat surprisingly, comes from among the industry itself, the Creative Committee of the 21st Century Comics group—calling itself an ad-hoc organization of people "from all parts of the industry including editors, syndicate representatives, representatives from the printing sector, and advertising sales experts." Remarkably, refreshingly, it recognizes a problem "of declining readership, declining advertising support and the tough requirements of an ever-changing society" that demands "action at every level."

Unfortunately, for the most part its direction seems to be toward practices and policies that have led to the very stultification it decries. The 21st Century Comics Group has reportedly raised a budget of more than two hundred thousand dollars to conduct its research and operations. Its Creative Committee has just issued a draft of its revised proposals, and it might be interesting to cite a few.

- There is a suggestion that editors "segment" their comic sections: "...an editor may call a page 'The Teen Page' or 'Rock and Romance.' The editor may call a partial page or section 'For Kids' or 'Fun and Games.'"
- The tone of comics sections, it says, must be made more modern in its appearance and graphics. Included here are suggestions for "fresh, modern typography" that "must be used in title boxes."
- The report suggests innovative layouts and the juggling of features, color bars, large-type text, white space, posters, jokes, etc. In this section is an option of "producing alternate smaller versions" of "several of the most popular comics" to be mixed with "one large, impactful new feature."
- The need for "form in any single strip" to be "far more varied" is referred to with recommendations to employ "large panels and small; tint blocks; large borders; varying sizes of panels; shadow boxes...." "...Outline the entire strip with a heavy color border..."
- "Interaction" is urged for young readers: "They want to participate by, for instance, making nominations of 'Best Kid on the Block' or 'Best Teacher'."
- Text features are urged for teens, to be incorporated into the comic sections...also a "fixer" column—"a how-to approach to maintaining things like bikes, stereos, earrings, cameras, etc."

The report also condemns two factors we around here think are particularly troublesome in comics these days: The tendency for "contemporary" strips to simply not be funny, and the new wave of amateurish artwork dominating recent strip offerings in recent years. For calling attention to these two manifestations of lower standards the 21st Century group is to be especially commended.

But on virtually every other point we vehemently dissent because we perceive that the committee has concerned itself with packaging rather than basic quality. It seems to be more concerned with diversifying rather than getting back to basics. The whole flavor of the report is one of straining for ways (and not all that cleverly) to *cope* with some clearly troublesome implications for newspaper comics, rather than determining to meet and beat the challenge.

The truth is that the overall level of strip quality in the 1980s is lower; on the creative side the foregoing is a contention rather than a fact, but in terms of production values, the statement is inarguable. Compared to years ago, the paper is lousier; the color range is far more limited; the printing is inferior...and all this during a period of technological improvements.

Suggestions to departmentalize the funnies for youngsters, teens, etc., represent trivialization at best and condescension at worst. What young teen back in the '30s, for instance, given a choice between an "interaction" page of however fine a quality ("nominations for best teacher"??) and a full-page, gloriously colored, blood-and-guts *Flash Gordon* adventure, would not have chosen the latter?

Of course the question is moot; there were no such choices in the '30s. The only choices were between strips—strips of all varieties of themes, in larger-than-life sizes, sometimes 32 or more of them to a Sunday section! Herein lies the crux. Let's stay with the 1930s as a period against which to compare, because the impact of TV and video games are pointed to reflexively by many current apologists. In the 1930s kids—and all readers—had distractions to compete with comics: movies, serials, radio shows, popular magazines, comic books, Big Little Books, and the like. It was a heady time for popular entertainment, and comics could easily have been lost in the shuffle. But artists and syndicate managers sought to reject compromise and stretch comics to the limits of their form and formats. The comics were fun, exciting, worth waiting for. Worth buying an entire newspaper for.

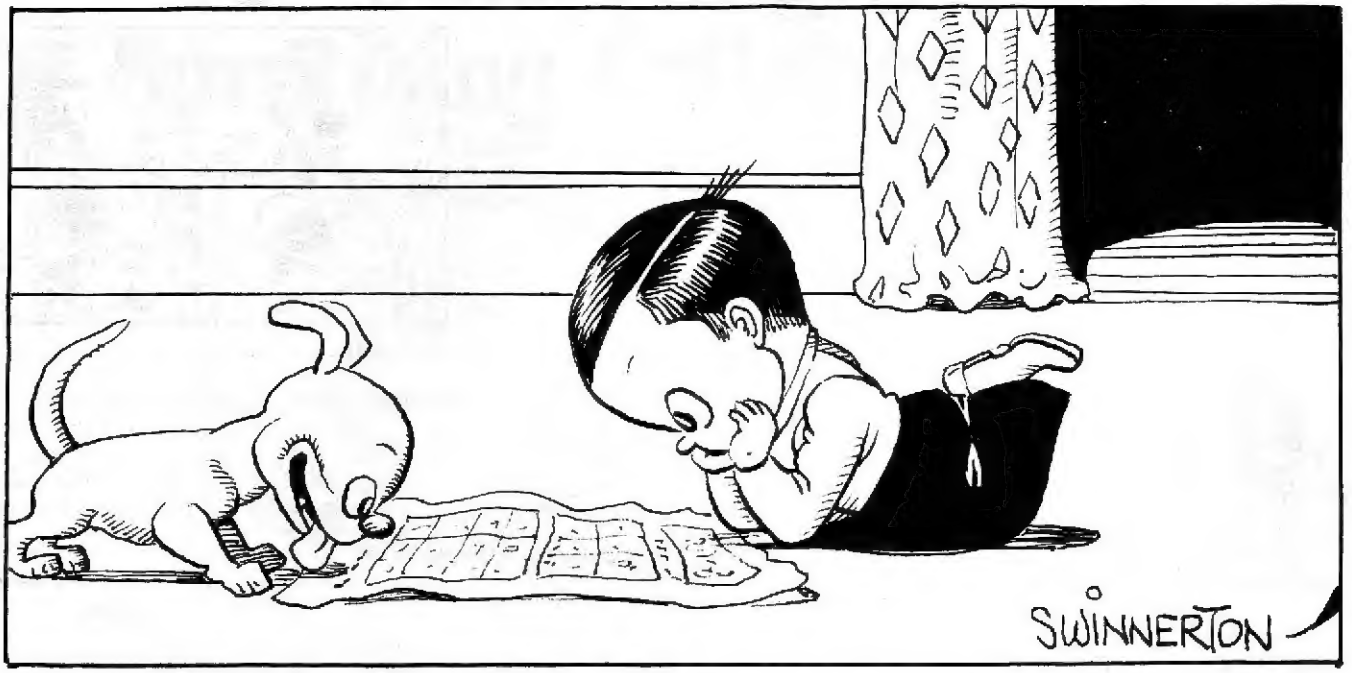
In recent years, by contrast, the "challenge" of TV was met by arbitrary edicts to keep story continuities to 13 weeks. Supposedly readers would lose interest after that period; the arguments also ran (explaining the decline of adventure strips) that readers could get a mystery answered in an hour on TV and wouldn't tolerate waiting weeks and weeks in papers.

Baloney, as Rube used to say. The comic strip should be—and *is*—dealt with in its own context. When recordings came along, people didn't stop going to concert halls. When TV became commonplace, movie theaters didn't disappear. The comics' masters should shed their self-defensive attitudes and realize that they have just about the only things in newspapers that rivals cannot offer their customers. People are going elsewhere for their news, sports, and weather, and one gets the impression that myopic print editors are horrified at the possibility that readers would actually buy their product to read some funny pictures!

Harold Gray, in *Little Orphan Annie*, sometimes ran his stories a *year* before clearing up the mysteries' loose ends. There are no records of massive complaints for that technique, or mass cancellations because of it. His epics still hold up well, and we'd venture to say that any reader of the comics is going to care more about interesting characters, intriguing stories, clever subplots, action, suspense, and adventure, than whether an arbitrary, straitjacket timetable is being adhered to.

We are getting down to the factor that forms the core of the problem: Respect. Respect of the creators for their product, respect of the syndicate managers for the form, respect of the editors for both the comics and their readers.

The commercial pressures, requests, and accommodations have come so fast that it is difficult to assign responsibility. But there is enough blame to go around. We are the first to grant that this forum is an ivory tower from which to carp, and from which to rhapsodize about the Good Old Days. But we are aware of the economic pressures; newspapers are being crunched between declining readership and crumbling ad bases and support. We are aware that older, finer technologies



must be held in the balance against speed and cost efficiencies.

But the whole point is that there are no easy choices, no cheap answers to a problem that has at least and at last been admitted by the industry. Respect: Artists and syndicates must draw the line to the everlasting demands for smaller size and starker simplicity. Syndicates have got to impose editorial quality control on their own products and new offerings. Local editors must show some respect to their readers by deciding when to stop compromising with this precious baby of theirs.

Sunday comics, for instance, are in danger of being thought of by the junior bookkeepers who have risen to positions of authority as targets for cost-effectiveness studies. Does the section carry its own weight? Should more ads be jammed in? More ads would mean dropping, or shrinking, the remaining comics. No matter...

No, the comics deserve—and just as importantly, the readers deserve—some hard answers that would for a change come down in favor of expansion and upgrading. They may be expensive answers, but the survival of newspaper comics is at stake.

In this regard, we have compiled our own list of recommendations that address the crisis as 21st Century Comics defined it. Herewith the *NEMO* Manifesto:

- Utilize improved technologies. Or at least return to proven higher-standard processes. This means forsaking the temptation to abandon printing from metal plates and proofing on coated stock for reproduction. The factors that have led most newspapers to offset-printing from plastic plates are probably too great to be overcome, but the problem should not be compounded by inferior reproduction at the syndicate level.
- Likewise with color: There has got to be a return to the ability to print brilliant tones, graded and blending colors, and consistency in registration. Is it a wonder that kids may not fight to read the funnies first when those comics are dishwater-hued, double-imaged, and crammed four or five to a page?
- The next point flows logically: Respect the comics and their readers by giving the strips some breathing room. It is our contention that a necessary ingredient of a revival of Sunday comics is the return of the full-page strip (at least a couple in the field). That the artist might again devote loving attention to his visuals, that readers can get lost in a detailed, mature page, that kids can greet a larger-than-life piece of well-drawn brilliantly colored excitement every week—this can generate readership. Mere color-bars across page tops won't do.
- Return to the continuity. This flies in the face of all conventional wisdom, but our contention is that most story strips today suffer not from quantitative comparisons with TV dramas. Most are simply not that interesting to read any more. Compared to anything. Whatever the cause, that is the situation. We need well-written stories, perhaps some daring themes and treatments, and even humorous continuities, a style that utterly dominated humor strips for decades. It is practical, clever, and it sells papers (what will happen tomorrow—no matter how adventurous or how silly the premise—will keep those readers coming). It's nothing new; it's just something forgotten or badly used. Bring it back!
- Promote the darn things. Why were comics, their creators, and everything connected with them at one time things for news and feature stories? Because they were important to the survival of newspapers. They still are, and editors should act like they know it. Who can blame readers for considering comics the newspapers' bastard children when many editors do the same?
- Exercise some quality control over writing and artwork. How have we arrived at this bizarre pass where so many new offerings are sophomoric and amateurish? It is as much the fault of those who buy the product as those who sell it, but it is a rather shameful state of affairs. Morever this aspect, as well as all others we have cited, will serve to drive gifted artists and potential comic-strip masters into other fields where their talents might be better showcased and respected.

We're afraid that there is a subtle distinction in this report that could have fatal implications when carried too far. Well-meaning analysts can operate from a larger concern for overall readership, for newspapers' fiscal needs, and for perhaps sacrificing traditional appeal with "today's" "contemporary" "interactions," to use three buzz words. Comics could logically find themselves low men on the totem pole of demographics and marketing strategies.

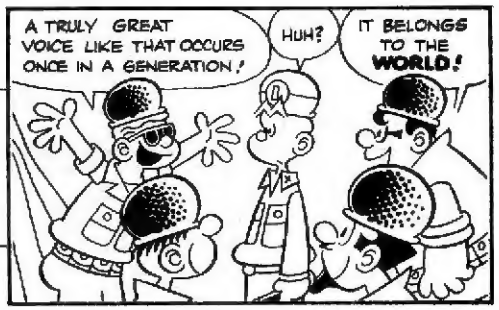
Our view totally respects those requirements; after all, if there were no newspapers, comics would be just another trivia game instead of a vital medium. We shudder. *NEMO* is as much concerned with the future as with the past. Our view is merely that the newspaper can *best* be served by letting comics be all they can be.

We believe it is fundamentals, not superficial gimmicks, that will save the newspaper strip from the dilemma 21st Century points to.

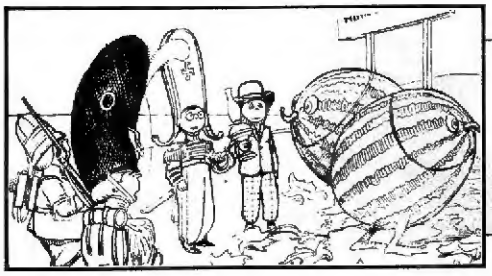
We believe one more thing: It doesn't take two hundred thousand-plus dollars to apply some common sense and a measure of realism to the challenge.

Richard Marshall

Coming in Nemo #5!



BEETLE MANIA—Mort Walker gives a rare, exclusive interview to NEMO. With many surprises: Walker talks about censorship, the future of comics, problems in the industry, etc. Also: An illustrated tribute to Walker by Dik Browne, and advance material from Walker's new retrospective book.



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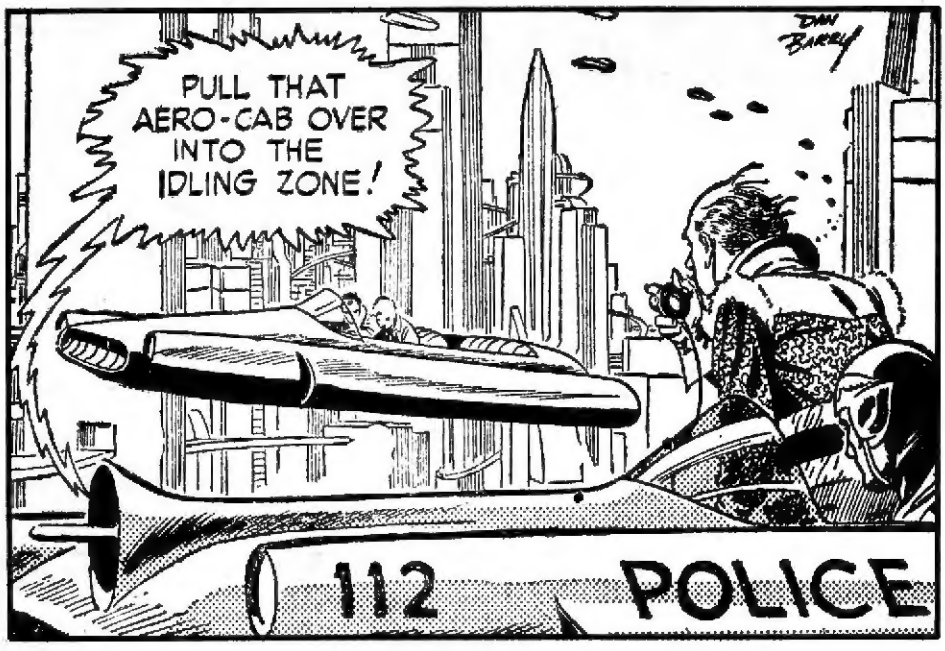


Kurtzman and Frazetta's Contributions To Dan Barry's Flash Gordon

Every fan of the great comic strips knows Alex Raymond's *Flash Gordon*. But less well-known are the great *Flash Gordon* daily strips from the 1950s and 1960s.

Flash Gordon began as a Sunday page January 7th, 1934, and was drawn by Alex Raymond until April 30th, 1944. A daily strip, drawn for most of its run by Austin Briggs, began May 27th, 1940 and ended June 3rd, 1944. It was, unfortunately, a pale imitation of the Sunday page.

When Alex Raymond joined the Marines, the daily strip ended and Austin Briggs took over the Sunday page—and once again the strip seemed interminably boring. Mac Raboy replaced him on August 1st, 1948; this new cartoonist's art was pretty, especially at first, but the stories were as silly as ever. (For that matter, the Alex Raymond stories were silly: the art carried the strip.)

Then, on November 19th, 1952, the daily strip was revived, in the hands of Dan Barry. He continues the strip today, and, following Raboy's death, he took over the Sunday also, on December 24th, 1967.

Dan Barry's art is more consistent than his writing. Even at that, he has always employed various assistants on the strip. In the first years, Murphy Anderson's influence was strongly in evidence, and several other artists can be seen over the years. One of the most interesting is Frank Frazetta, who worked on pencilling during the following sequence. The story was written by Harvey Kurtzman, one of two *Flash Gordon* sequences he scripted. The significant collaboration was unfortunately short-lived; Frazetta pencilled only portions of this sequence. Kurtzman reports no particular problems in working with Barry—but the decade held many other challenges for his talents.

—Rick Norwood

(This is the first in a series of Rick Norwood's selections of great stories from daily comic strips. This sequence, "Mr. Murlin," is from Dec. 31, 1952 to April 20, 1953.)

FLASH! I-I REALLY DON'T SEE WHY I SHOULD GO ON WITH YOU IN YOUR SEARCH FOR DALE!
I'M GOING BACK TO TARTARUS! WE HAVE FRIENDS THERE!
MARLA'S RIGHT, FLASH! IT'S TOO RISKY GOING ON LIKE THIS! I'M GOING BACK WITH HER!
AAH...GOOD RIDDANCE TO THE SISSIES!
...SURE YOU WANT TO STICK WITH ME, RAY? I DON'T KNOW WHAT LIES AHEAD!
YOU SURE DON'T, FLASH!
GEE, FLASH! THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY END TO THESE SPOOKY FORESTS AND WEIRD MOUNTAINS!
MAYBE MARLA HAD THE RIGHT IDEA, FLASH! MAYBE WE ALL SHOULD HAVE GONE BACK TO TARTARUS... HUH?
FLASH! WHAT'S THE MATTER? DON'T TELL ME THERE'S ANOTHER WEIRD SETUP AHEAD!
SEE FOR YOURSELF!
HEY! THAT LOOKS FAMILIAR!
...ALMOST LIKE A LITTLE COTTAGE YOU MIGHT FIND IN ENGLAND BACK ON EARTH!
DO YOU THINK IT'S REAL?
...ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT! I'LL JUST KNOCK...
HELLO, FLASH GORDON! HELLO, RAY!...COME IN!
...I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
YES...I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU...
...BUT FIRST COME IN AND SIT DOWN! YOU MUST BE TIRED!
THIS ROOM!...STRANGE! IT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING! ...AN ALCHEMIST'S SHOP OUT OF FOURTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND!
OF COURSE, FLASH GORDON! THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT IS!
YOU SEE, I AM FROM THE 14TH CENTURY BACK ON EARTH... YET I KNOW YOU BOTH!
...I WILL EXPLAIN, BUT FIRST EAT AND DRINK! YOU ARE BOTH TIRED FROM YOUR HARROWING ADVENTURES!
I'LL SAY WE'VE HAD ADVENTURES! AND ALL BECAUSE OF A COUPLE OF WOMEN! LOOKING FOR DALE! LOOKING FOR MARLA! LOOKING FOR DALE! WOMEN! YOU CAN HAVE 'EM!
...EXCUSE ME!
...BEFORE YOU GO ANY FURTHER, I THINK I OUGHT TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MY DAUGHTER!

Strips from the collection of Rick Norwood. Reproduced with the permission of and © King Features Syndicate, Inc.

MY NAME IS MURLIN...
...AND BEFORE YOU GO INTO ANY MORE OF YOUR THEORIES ON GIRLS, RAY, I THINK YOU OUGHT TO MEET MY DAUGHTER MARILYN!
I'M SURE RAY ISN'T ANGRY AT ALL GIRLS!
COME WITH ME, RAY! YOU MUST SEE FATHER'S PERFECTLY MARVELOUS INVENTIONS!
HUH!
SEE? OVER THERE? FATHER CALLS THAT MACHINE THE 'ORB'! IT DOES THE MOST PERFECTLY FANTASTIC THINGS YOU HAVE EVER SEEN!
FATHER IS GOING TO SHOW YOU HOW THE ORB WORKS! IT'S REALLY FABULOUS!
FIRST I'VE GOT TO MIX THE ELEMENTS IN THEIR PROPER PROPORTIONS!
...I SET THEM UNDER THE CAP OF THE ORB... GIVE THEM TIME TO INTERMINGLE...
NOW WATCH CAREFULLY...
ALL IS READY! I SEND A SOUND SIGNAL TO THE ORB.. WATCH WHAT HAPPENS!
HMM! IT'S RISING BY ITSELF!
I'LL BE DARNED! AND YOU DIRECT IT BY SOUND!
THAT'S NOT SO MUCH! FLASH AND I SAW LOTS OF FLOATING MACHINES DURING OUR ADVENTURES!
BUT THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING! SHOW THEM THE 'ORB-VIEWER,' DADDY!
YES! THE ORB IS ACTUALLY LIKE AN EYE THAT CAPTURES THE IMAGE OF EVERYTHING BENEATH IT! IT THEN RELAYS THE IMAGE TO MY ORB-VIEWER!... OBSERVE!
HEY, LOOK, FLASH! T.V.!
AN IMAGE OF US LOOKING AT US LOOKING AT US!
THAT ORB IS LIKE A FLOATING CAMERA!
NOW I SHALL SEND IT ON A LITTLE TRIP OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE!
AND WE WILL FOLLOW ITS FLIGHT IN THIS VIEWER!
THE ORB TRAVELS FAST...IS NOW FAR AWAY!
HEY! THE LAND OF THE BUTTERFLY MEN!
THE ORB IS RETURNING!
THERE ARE MARLA AND KENT WITH MEEMIR! THEY'VE REACHED TARTARUS!
...BUT WHAT'S THAT?
THE ORB IS JUST OUTSIDE THE COTTAGE NOW...AND THAT, MY FRIEND, IS THE DEVICE THAT BROUGHT ME INTO THIS CENTURY...
...THE TIME CASE!
WHAT'S THIS CONTRAPTION?
I CALL IT THE 'TIME-CASE'! HOLD THAT, PLEASE!
SIR! YOU ARE AMAZING! YOU NO DOUBT WORK WITH FISSIONABLE MATERIAL? RADIO-ACTIVE.
I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH YOUR TERMS, BUT WE ALCHEMISTS WORK WITH EYE OF NEWT... WING OF BAT...
JUST LET ME SLIP THIS IN PLACE!
THERE! NOW THE INGREDIENTS OF MY 'TIME-CASE' ARE IN PLACE! DO YOU NOTICE ANYTHING ODD, FLASH GORDON?
HMMM...
AND DO YOU, DEAR READER?

DON'T YOU NOTICE SOMETHING ODD ABOUT THE 'TIME-CASE', RAY?
HUH?
YES! THIS IS VERY STRANGE!
WHEN I LOOK DOWN THROUGH THE CENTER OF THE TIME-CASE, I CAN SEE THE FLOOR, BUT THE 'TIME-CASE' SCAFFOLD IS INVISIBLE!
DO YOU DO IT WITH MIRRORS?
NO! NO MIRRORS! THE EXPLANATION IS SIMPLE! THIS 'TIME-CASE' EXISTS IN BOTH THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE. THE SCAFFOLD DOES NOT! EVERYTHING YOU SEE THROUGH AND BEYOND THE 'TIME-CASE' EXISTS IN THE FUTURE!
SIMPLE IS IT NOT?
THIS CERTAINLY IS CRAZY! WHEN I LOOK THROUGH THE HOLE IN THIS SQUARE DOUGHNUT, I DON'T SEE MY HAND... THE SCAFFOLD... ANYTHING! ... ONLY THE GROUND!
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU ARE LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE, MY BOY!
SEE? WHEN I THROW STONES, LEAVES, TWIGS THROUGH THE 'SQUARE DOUGHNUT'... I THROW THEM INTO THE FUTURE!
THEY'RE SURE NOT COMING OUT OF THIS SIDE!
DOES THAT MEAN, MR. MURLIN, THAT IF I PASSED THROUGH THAT HOLE, I WOULD GO INTO THE FUTURE?
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT MEANS!
WITH YOUR PERMISSION, MR. MURLIN, I WOULD LIKE TO CLIMB THROUGH THE TIME CASE INTO THE FUTURE! THERE IS SOMETHING I'D LIKE VERY MUCH TO KNOW!
DO NOT TROUBLE YOURSELF! THE 'ORB' SHALL DO IT FOR YOU!
I HAVE A TECHNIQUE! FIRST I DIRECT THE 'ORB' WITH MY HORN, DOWN INTO THE TIME CASE... INTO THE FUTURE!
NOW THE 'ORB' WANDERS ABOUT IN THE FUTURE, SENDING A CONTINUOUS PICTURE BACK TO THE VIEWER WHICH IS ALSO SET DOWN IN THE FUTURE! NOW... LOOK!
YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT THIS THING LOOKS INTO THE FUTURE THROUGH THE USE OF CRUDE ELEMENTS OF ALCHEMY... LIKE 'EYE OF NEWT... WING OF BAT'...?
I REALIZE THAT ALCHEMY HAS GONE INTO HIGHER PLANES SINCE MY TIME IN THE 14TH CENTURY!
MY INVENTIONS HAVE NEVER GOTTEN INVOLVED IN THE COMPLEXITIES OF MODERN SCIENCE! YOU MIGHT SAY I OVERLOOK THE TREES TO SEE THE FOREST!
BUT COME! LOOK INTO THE VIEWER!
WHAT DO YOU SEE?
WHY... WHY THAT'S ME! AND THERE'S A WOMAN WALKING TOWARDS ME... A YOUNG WOMAN!
YES, FLASH GORDON! YOU ARE SEEING YOURSELF IN THE FUTURE...
AND DO YOU RECOGNIZE THE WOMAN COMING TOWARDS YOU?
WHY... YOU BET I DO! THAT'S DALE!
... DALE ARDEN!

DALE!
...IS IT REALLY YOU?
AHEM! I'VE GOT SOME LIZARD SKINS DRYING ON THE FIRE THAT I HAVE TO ATTEND TO!
GOLLY! I'LL STAY! I'VE GOT SO MANY QUESTIONS TO ASK DALE!
I THINK I'LL GO AND HELP YOU, FATHER!
1-17
RAY! YOUR MIZARD IS WAITING INSIDE — AND YOU DO WANT TO SHOW HIM TO ME, DON'T YOU?
DALE, HONEY! I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOUR TRAIL FOR A LONG, LONG TIME!
...LAST I HEARD, YOU WERE LEFT IN THE AWFUL FOREST -- NOW YOU POP UP HERE!... BUT HOW?
I GUESS I JUST WANDERED HERE AFTER I ESCAPED FROM THE AWFUL FOREST AND THE 'BLACK DUKE'! I DON'T RECALL TOO CLEARLY... IT WAS SO HORRIBLE --
I FOUND HER WANDERING IN THE WOODS...
...SHE WAS DAZED -- FRIGHTENED! I'VE KEPT HER HERE AT THE COTTAGE IN COMFORT AND SAFETY!
...AND WHEN I SAW IN THE 'TIME-CASE' THAT YOU WERE COMING HERE -- OH, FLASH, HONEY! IT'S ALL OVER -- ALL THE TEARS AND WORRYING -- LIKE A BAD DREAM!
DAN BARRY 1-19
ISN'T IT WONDERFUL THAT FLASH AND DALE ARE TOGETHER AGAIN, RAY?
SURE... THAT'S GREAT! BUT I HAVEN'T FOUND MY DAD YET...
...HAVING FLASH AS A PAL KINDA MADE UP FOR NOT HAVING DAD AROUND -- BUT NOW FLASH DOESN'T NEED ME! IN FACT WHO DOES?
WHY, RAY! DON'T BE SILLY! FLASH IS STILL YOUR PAL!...
AND I THINK YOU'RE NICE, TOO!
DAN BARRY 1-20
DO NOT GIVE UP HOPE, RAY! YOU WILL YET FIND YOUR FATHER!
..LOOK HERE! I HAVE WATCHED MANY PASSING EVENTS IN MY TIME-VIEWER -- AND HAVE RECORDED MANY OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT SCENES ON CRYSTAL CAPSULES!
THE CAPSULES ARE DATED AND FILED! AND WHEN I WISH TO BRING BACK A PARTICULAR SCENE...
...I MERELY HEAT THE SPECIAL CRYSTAL, AND PLACE IT INSIDE THE VIEWER...
...AND THE SCENE APPEARS AGAIN! NOW, RAY -- WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THAT SCENE?
HEY!... THERE'S MY DAD!
DAN BARRY 1-21
IT'S DAD! HE'S LOOKING RIGHT AT ME AND WAVING!
YES, RAY! YOUR FATHER WAS HERE! A FINE MAN -- HAS A TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF HIGHER ALCHEMY!
WHEN THE TIME-CASE SHOWED THAT HE WAS FATED TO MEET YOU SAFELY BACK ON EARTH, HE RETURNED THERE IN MY SPACE VEHICLE!
HE SAID HE WOULD BE WAITING FOR YOU TO JOIN HIM THERE!
LET'S ALL GO BACK! OUR SPACE SHIP IS STILL WHERE WE LEFT IT!
NO, RAY! YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS MUST RETURN -- BUT I CANNOT! FOR DISASTER AWAITS ME ON EARTH!
DAN BARRY 1-22

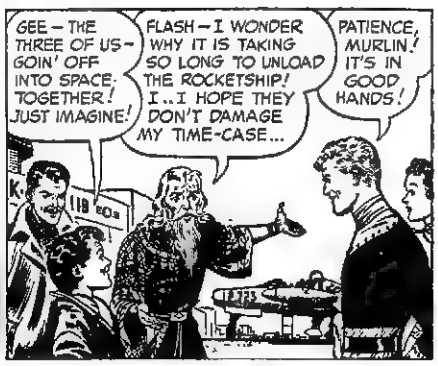
WHY DO YOU SAY DISASTER IS WAITING FOR YOU ON EARTH, MR. MURLIN?
THERE IS ONE TIME-RECORD I HAVE NEVER SHOWN MY DAUGHTER--BUT THE CHILDREN ARE ASLEEP NOW, SO YOU MAY SEE IT, FLASH GORDON!
THERE--THE CRYSTAL CAPSULE IS HEATING UP! THE IMAGE SHOULD APPEAR ON THE VIEWER SOON...
IT'S STARTING TO COME IN--LOOKS LIKE A MAN BEING SHOT! BUT WHO IS IT?
THE PICTURE'S CLEARING, FLASH! DO YOU SEE WHO IT IS NOW?
YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT BACK ON EARTH, YOU RECORDED THIS SCENE OF THE FUTURE? BUT... IT'S... IT'S..
...MY OWN DEATH SCENE, FLASH GORDON?--YES!
...AND THAT IS WHY I DARE NOT RETURN TO EARTH...
FOR SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE--THIS MAN--MY MURDERER--IS WAITING FOR ME!
CENTURIES IN THE FUTURE, THIS MAN--MY MURDERER--AWAITS ME! THAT IS WHY I DREAD RETURNING TO EARTH!
BUT, MR. MURLIN--YOU CAN'T REMAIN A HERMIT FOREVER! YOUR HOME IS ON EARTH--AND IF YOU WANT TO AVOID THAT MAN...
...YOU CAN MERELY LIVE YOUR LIFE OUT IN THIS CENTURY!
YES--YOU'RE RIGHT! IT HAS BEEN LONELY HERE! I WILL RETURN TO EARTH WITH YOU--BUT I WILL GO NO FURTHER INTO THE FUTURE!
MARILYN! RAY! I'VE GOT GOOD NEWS! WE'RE ALL LEAVING--WE'RE GOING BACK TO EARTH TOGETHER!
HOT ZIGGETY! HOME!--BACK WITH MY DAD AGAIN--AT LAST!
OH, RAY! WON'T IT BE FUN?!
BUT WAIT A SECOND! HOW DO WE KNOW THE ROCKET'S IN SHAPE?..
...THOSE BANDITS FROM TARTARUS LEFT IT IN SHAMBLES!
MR. MURLIN HAS BEEN WORKING ON IT, FLASH--
--YES! I...ER... HAVE MADE A FEW MINOR ADJUSTMENTS! HERE--YOU SEE IN THE TIME-CASE...
...A VIEW OF TOMORROW! THE SHIP IS FLYING!
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT HER READY, MR. MURLIN, BUT THE DIALS SAY SHE'S ALL SET TO GO!
ALL ABOARD THE 'EARTH EXPRESS'... WON'T BE ANOTHER ROCKET LEAVING FOR QUITE A WHILE!
SOON... A BLINDING BLAST--AND THE ROCKET IS LAUNCHED ON ITS RENDEZVOUS WITH EARTH... AND MR. MURLIN IS SPED TOWARDS A RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY!

GOSH, FLASH! THOSE BIG HUNKS OF PLANET SWINGING OUT THERE ARE A WONDERFUL SIGHT!
YEP! WE'RE BACK IN OUR OWN SOLAR SYSTEM, RAY! THERE'S OLD MAN JUPITER --THE BIGGEST BALL OF DEADLY GASES FLOATING AROUND OUR SUN...
AND THERE'S THE LAND OF CANALS--MARS! SOME DAY I'M GOING TO PLANT A FLAG ON ONE OF HER POLAR CAPS!
GEE!
NOW HERE'S A FAM LIAR PLANET COMING ALONG! RECOGNIZE IT?

AIRPLANE TO ROCKET! AIRPLANE TO ROCKET! ...YOU ARE IDENTIFIED AND CLEARED!
ROGER!
WELCOME HOME, FLASH GORDON!
EARTH!.. THAT'S THE GOOD OLD U.S.A. DOWN THERE!
MAYBE THIS TIME FLASH WILL SETTLE DOWN HERE FOR GOOD!
MY DAD IS WAITING FOR ME!
AT LAST! THE PLANET WHERE I WAS BORN!
EARTH! I'M BACK AT LAST! BUT WHAT NOW? --CAN I AVOID MY FATED MURDER?

WELCOME HOME, FLASH GORDON!
THEY'RE BACK FROM JUPITER!
DID THEY GET TO LAND ON IT?
WHAT'S IT LIKE IN OUTER SPACE?
HOW ABOUT AN EXCLUSIVE SERIES FOR MY MAGAZINE?
MR. GORDON! WE'RE PLANNING A MOVIE BASED ON YOUR LIFE...
GEE! THAT FLASH IS SOME DREAMBOAT!
DAD!
RAY, MY BOY!
WOULD YOU PLEASE POSE AGAIN LOOKING UP AT THE SKY?
HOW ABOUT AN AUTOGRAPH, MR. GORDON?... PLEASE!
FLASH! THIS IS THE KIND OF THING THAT MADE ME RUN AWAY FROM EARTH!

YOU WON'T FORGET TO VISIT DAD AND ME, FLASH! WE COULD ALL GO HUNTING AND FISHING TOGETHER—AN' HAVE LOTS O' FUN UNTIL WE TAKE OUR NEXT SPACE HOP—COULDN'T WE—HUH?
SURE—SURE, RAY! WE'LL ALL THREE BE PALS NOW!


GEE—THE THREE OF US—GOIN' OFF INTO SPACE, TOGETHER! JUST IMAGINE!
FLASH—I WONDER WHY IT IS TAKING SO LONG TO UNLOAD THE ROCKETSHIP! I..I HOPE THEY DON'T DAMAGE MY TIME-CASE...
PATIENCE, MURLIN! IT'S IN GOOD HANDS!

QUICK, SOMEBODY! (COUGH)...GET A CRASH CREW... CRASH CREW... THE ROCKETSHIP... HURRY.....

SOMETHING'S WRONG DOWN AT THE ROCKETSHIP!
HEY! CRASH TRUCK! WAIT FOR ME!
MUST BE A FIRE!

(COUGH)...ALL THIS SMOKE—BUT NO FLAME! (COUGH)
—HEY! THIS ISN'T SMOKE—IT'S GAS!

QUICK! HAND DOWN THE INHALATORS! THE LOADING CREW HAS BEEN KNOCKED OUT BY THIS GAS!
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM THAT STUFF THEY UNLOADED FROM THE ROCKET!
PUT ON THIS GAS MASK AND LEND A HAND, FLASH!
GET BUSY, YOU GUYS! FIND WHERE THAT GAS IS COMIN' FROM BEFORE IT KNOCKS OFF EVERYONE ON THIS BASE!
DAN BARRY 2-4
...AT THE EDGE OF THE AIRFIELD... PANIC!
GET EVERYONE BACK INTO THE BUILDINGS!
PANIC SPREADS AS THE AIRBASE AT WHICH FLASH LANDED IS COVERED WITH A DEADLY BLANKET OF GAS...
AT THE ROCKET, A CRASH CREW SEARCHES FRANTICALLY FOR THE SOURCE OF ESCAPING FUMES...
HEY! HERE IT IS!
DAN BARRY 2-5
IT'S COMING FROM MURLIN'S TIME-CASE!
YOU'VE FOUND IT, FLASH -BUT HOW WILL YOU STOP IT?
THE GAS IS COMING FROM THAT OPEN BOX, ALL RIGHT, FLASH! BUT HOW DO WE STOP IT?
—I'M NOT SURE — BUT THIS IS NO TIME TO STAND AROUND GUESSING!
...I'LL PULL THESE TIME CARTRIDGES OUT — AND WAIT A FEW MINUTES TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS...
—IT WORKED, FLASH! THE GAS IS LIFTING!
HOW'D YOU DO IT?
—JUST A GOOD GUESS! SOMEONE PUT THESE CARTRIDGES INTO THE TIME-CASE WHEN THEY UNLOADED IT FROM THE ROCKET! WHEN I REMOVED THEM — THE GAS STOPPED! THAT MEANS THE GAS WAS COMING THROUGH THE TIME-CASE OUT OF THE FUTURE!
DAN BARRY 2-6
THE GAS HAS LIFTED, FLASH! GOOD THING YOU STOPPED IT WHEN YOU DID — OR IT WOULD BE TOO LATE TO USE THESE RESPIRATORS!
I'M JUST GRATEFUL NO ONE WAS KILLED! YOU'VE GOT EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL NOW, MAJOR, SO I'LL BE MOVING ALONG!
DAN BARRY 2-7
COME ON, MURLIN! WE'RE GOING TO FIND A QUIET PLACE FOR YOU AND MARILYN TO STAY...
—THEN WE'RE GOING TO HAVE ANOTHER LOOK AT THAT TIME-CASE OF YOURS!
OHHH! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN IT! NO REST FOR THE WEARY ADVENTURER!
FLASH, THIS HOUSE IS BEAUTIFUL! A PERFECT PLACE TO CARRY ON MY WORK!
GOOD! — THEN LET'S GET STARTED! WE'RE GOING TO TRACK DOWN SOME POISON GAS!
THE TIME-CASE IS SET JUST AS IT WAS AT THE AIRPORT... GLASS PLATE TO KEEP THE GAS IN... VIEWER IN PLACE...
...NOW LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THIS CITY 1000 YEARS FROM NOW...
DAN BARRY 2-9
—COVERED WITH THAT DEADLY GAS! — A GHOST TOWN!
COPR. 1951 KING FEATURES SYNDICATE, INC., WORLD RIGHTS RESERVED.

LOOK! THIS CITY 1000 YEARS FROM NOW — AS STILL AS DEATH!
COVERED BY THAT POISON GAS! — BUT HOW? WHY?
HOWEVER THIS IS TO HAPPEN, THE CAUSE IS TO BE FOUND IN THE NEXT 1000 YEARS! IF WE COULD FIND OUT WHEN...
FLASH! I'VE SET THE TIME-CASE AT 900 YEARS FROM NOW — AND THERE IS NO GAS COVERING THE CITY!
THEN THE CITY IS DOOMED TO PERISH SOME TIME AFTER THAT! AND I'M GOING TO SEE IF I CAN FIND OUT WHY!
DAN BARRY 2-10
IF I'M GOING INTO THE 29TH CENTURY, I'LL NEED A COSTUME TO FIT THE TIMES! DALE, WOULD YOU...?
NO! I WOULDN'T! IF YOU INSIST ON DASHING OFF AT THE DROP OF A HAT, I'M NOT GOING TO BE A PARTY TO IT!
THE DROP OF A HAT? — BUT I MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE A WHOLE CITY THAT'S DOOMED TO PERISH...
YOU KNOW VERY WELL YOUR ONLY MOTIVE IS TO FIND SOME EXCITEMENT FOR YOURSELF! AND IF YOU THINK...
DEAR READER: WE WILL SKIP THE DETAILS OF AN AGELESS ARGUMENT...
...THAT ENDS IN THE USUAL WAY!
YOUR COSTUME IS PERFECT! GOOD LUCK, FLASH GORDON!
BE CAREFUL, DARLING!
COPR. 1934, KING FEATURES SYNDICATE, Inc., WORLD RIGHTS RESERVED
FLASH VENTURES 900 YEARS INTO THE FUTURE IN AN EFFORT TO SAVE AN AMERICAN CITY FROM COMPLETE ANNIHILATION!
WELL, THIS TIME-CASE REALLY WORKS!
NOW I'LL GATHER SOME CLUES — AND TRY TO SLIP BACK TO MURLIN'S LABORATORY THROUGH THE TIME-CASE WITHOUT BEING NOTICED!
DAN BARRY 2-12
THINGS HAVE CHANGED A LOT SINCE MY TIME! WONDER WHAT THE PAPERS LOOK LIKE NOW!
I'LL PICK UP A FEW AND SLIP BACK INTO THE TIME-CASE!
PERIOD-CALS
...NOW TO GO BACK 900 YEARS AND STUDY THESE NEWSPAPERS IN MURLIN'S LABORATORY!
A PAIR OF WATCHFUL EYES LOOK ON AS FLASH AND THE TIME-CASE VANISH INTO NOTHINGNESS...
HO, FLASH! HOW DID IT FEEL TO VISIT INTO THE FUTURE?
PAINLESS, MURLIN! I BROUGHT BACK SOME MAPS AND NEWSPAPERS TO STUDY...
WE KNOW THIS CITY IS TO BE A GHOST TOWN IN 1000 YEARS, AND THESE PAPERS MAY TELL ME WHO WOULD WANT TO DESTROY IT — AND WHY!
DAN BARRY 2-13
HMM! PEOPLE WON'T CHANGE MUCH IN 900 YEARS! LOOK — AN INVESTIGATION OF RACKETEERS ON THE WATERFRONT! HERE'S A PHOTO OF SOME HOODLUMS — NOTHING SPECIAL
OH, NO?

I SEE NO CLUE IN THESE PAPERS AS TO WHY THIS CITY IS TO BE DESTROYED, FLASH!
NINE HUNDRED YEARS WON'T CHANGE SOME THINGS! ALL THE NEWS IS ABOUT AN INVESTIGATION OF BIG-CITY RACKETEERING!
THIS COULD BE ANY BUNCH OF MOBSTERS RIGHT HERE IN THE... THE...
YES, FLASH?
HEY! WAIT A SECOND!
THAT FACE! BETTER NOT LET MURLIN SEE THIS!
OH...N-NOTHING, MR. MURLIN, I JUST HAD A THOUGHT! MAYBE THIS GANG IS TIED IN WITH THAT POISON GAS! I'M GOING TO DO SOME INVESTIGATING!
ACCORDING TO THE MAP I BROUGHT BACK, AND THE ADDRESS I READ IN THE NEWS STORY, THAT GANG'S HEADQUARTERS WILL BE LOCATED ABOUT HERE!
THE CITY'S REALLY GOING TO SPREAD OUT IN 900 YEARS!
FRANKLY, FLASH, I FAIL TO SEE HOW OR WHY A CRIMINAL WOULD HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THAT POISON GAS YOU'RE HUNTING DOWN!
JUST A HUNCH, MURLIN! DON'T FOLLOW ME WITH THE ORB! I'LL POP BACK SOON!
WHILE, 900 YEARS AHEAD...
BOSS! HEY, BOSS! HAVE I GOT NEWS!
900 YEARS IN THE FUTURE...
BOSS! HEY, BOSS!
HELLO, KID! I WAS JUST GOING OUT!
BOSS! I JUST SAW SOMETHING! YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT! I'M STANDIN' IN AN ALLEY, SEE...?
AN' ALL OF A SUDDEN I SEE THIS FLOATIN BOX! THEN — ZOWIE! OUT POPS THIS GUY — RIGHT OUTA THIN AIR!
MAYBE YOU NEED A VACATION, KID! ...A WEEK IN LUNAR CITY, MAYBE?
HONEST, BOSS! I FOLLOWS THE GUY, SEE? THEN HE STEPS BACK IN THE BOX AN...POP!... THEY BOTH GO UP IN THIN AIR AGAIN! IT ALL HAPPENS IN AN ALLEY... JUST, LIKE... LIKE...
HEY, BOSS!
THERE IT IS, BOSS! GET BACK!
NOW WATCH!
IF MY CALCULATIONS WERE RIGHT, THIS IS THE BUILDING THAT RACKETEER LIVES IN! I'LL GO AROUND TO THE FRONT AND...
HOLD IT, PAL... AND REACH!
YOU!!
REACH, BUSTER! WHA..!?
IT'S HIM! THE MAN WHO'S SUPPOSED TO MURDER MURLIN!
ALL RIGHT, FELLA — GIVE! WHO ARE YOU — AND WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
HANDS OFF, MAC! YOU'D BETTER ANSWER THEM QUESTIONS FIRST!

IT WOULD SUIT ME FINE TO PULL THIS TRIGGER, FELLA! YOU'D BETTER SPEAK UP...
GET 'IM, BOSS!
HOLD IT!
2-21
BOYS! HELP! GIVE ME A HAND OUT HERE!
BOYS! HELP!
THAT TAKES CARE OF ONE... NOW FOR YOU...
2-23
TWO DOWN! I'D BETTER DUCK BEFORE HELP GETS H..
WHOOF!
OKAY, BOYS! DRAG HIM INTO THE APARTMENT, THEN BEAT IT!
I'D LIKE TO GIVE THIS WISE GUY A GOING OVER, BOSS!
HOLD IT, GEORGIE!
WHILE WE WERE TUSSLING WITH THIS GUY, THAT TRICK 'FLOATING BOX' DISAPPEARED!
2-24
...WHEN HE COMES TO, THIS JOKER'S GOING TO TELL US ALL ABOUT THAT GADGET—JUST LEAVE IT TO 'BOSS PUNCH'!
BOSS PUNCH! ON YOUR TOES! THE CITY'S PROSECUTOR IS ON HIS WAY UP!
OH, OH! WHAT DO WE DO BOSS?
THAT BLASTED MAYOR WOULD SEND A MAN UP NOW! THEY'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ME TO MAKE ONE SLIP—THEY'LL THROW THE BOOK AT ME IF THEY FIND THIS GUY HERE!
-BUT HOW DO WE GET RID OF HIM?
-THE FASTEST WAY I KNOW! OPEN UP THAT WINDOW, KID!
2-25
BY THE TIME THE CITY PROSECUTOR GETS UP HERE, WE'LL BE GONE!
DUMP THIS JOKER IN THE BACK SEAT OF THE AERO-CAB, GEORGIE!
RIGHT, BOSS!
2-26
PUSH HIM DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND THROW THE BLANKET OVER HIM!
NOW STEP ON THE BOOSTER AND LET'S GO!
BOSS PUNCH! ISN'T THAT A POLICE AERO-CAB COMING TOWARD US?

PULL THAT AERO-CAB OVER INTO THE 'DLING ZONE!
112
POLICE
WELL! THE MAYOR HIMSELF! LISTEN! I'M A LAW-ABIDING CITIZEN! YOU CAN'T SHOVE ME AROUND!
WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO AVOID OUR PROSECUTOR, PUNCH?
GOT ANYTHING TO HIDE?
PUNCH! WE KNOW YOU'RE RUNNING THE RACKETS AT THE CARGO-LOADING SPACE PLATFORMS OFFSHORE! WE HAVEN'T PROVED IT YET, BUT WE'RE GOING TO TRY!
AND WE'RE STARTING WITH THIS!..
...A SUMMONS TO APPEAR BEFORE A PLANETARY INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE!
HAH! YOU GUYS ARE JUST ITCHING TO SEND ME UP TO THE MARS PRISON! BUT YOU CAN'T GET A THING ON ME! I'M CLEAN AS A NEW SNOWFALL!
2-21
GRO-OAN!
MO-OAN!
BOSS! HE'S GROAN-NG! I'D BETTER SLUG HIM, HUH, BOSS?
EASY, STUPID...
THEY'RE GONE!.. I GUESS THOSE COPS COULDN'T HEAR HIM OVER THE ENGINE ROAR!
HE CAN GROAN ALL HE WANTS TO, NOW!
THEY GIVE ME, BOSS PUNCH, A SUMMONS TO APPEAR BEFORE AN INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE!... PAH!
I'VE GOT THE WATERFRONT SPACE-CARGO OPERATIONS UNDER MY THUMB! PRETTY SOON I'LL HAVE THE WHOLE CITY SEWED UP..
BUT NOW THEY'RE STARTING THESE INVESTIGATIONS! TRYING TO SQUEEZE BOSS PUNCH, EH?
3-3
WELL, BUSTER, I SMELL AN OUT...
...AN' YOU AN' THAT MAGIC BOX ARE IT!
THAT TRUTH SERUM LOOSENED THIS JOKER'S TONGUE! SO HE CAME HERE OUT OF THE PAST?
...THEN THAT TIME-CASE HAS TO SHOW UP FOR HIM TO GET BACK!
LISTEN, BOSS! IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT'S COMING BACK! CAN'T ONE OF THE OTHER BOYS WATCH FOR IT?
NO!
...NO, GEORGIE! THIS IS GOING TO BE OUR LITTLE SECRET... YOURS AND MI--
THERE IT IS!
BOSS! BOSS! BOSS!

OH, MR. MURLIN! FLASH WAS DUE BACK LONG AGO! DO YOU THINK SOMETHING'S HAPPENED?
DO NOT FRET, MY DEAR! HE WILL BE BACK!...SEE? SEE? HE IS RETURNING EVEN NOW...
...YOU!
ONE FALSE MOVE, WHISKERS, AND THIS GUN GOES OFF!
DAN BARRY 3-5
WHAT A SET-UP, GEORGIE! WE'RE NINE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE PAST! THE MAYOR'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH ME HERE! THE PERFECT HIDEOUT!
WE'RE GOING BACK TO THE OFFICE, GEORGIE — AND START SOME REAL OPERATIONS! AND TO BE SURE THESE JOKERS TAKE GOOD CARE OF THIS HIDEOUT...
DAN BARRY 3-6
...MAYBE WE'D BETTER TAKE ALONG A HOSTAGE — EH, GEORGIE?
COME ON, KID! INSIDE THE MACHINE! YOU'RE COMING WITH US!
FATHER!
3-7
BACK! GET BACK, GOLDEN BOY!
REMEMBER, NO TRICKS WITH THIS TIME-CASE! WE'LL BE BACK!
SO LONG, SUCKERS!
YOU TAKE THE KID TO THE OFFICE, GEORGIE! I'LL WAIT HERE A MINUTE!
HA! I THOUGHT SO!
DAN BARRY 3-9
HAW! I FIGURED THAT FLASH GORDON FELLA WOULD TRY TO FOLLOW US!... HE WON'T TRY IT AGAIN!
THE BOYS ARE HAVING SOME TROUBLE DOWN AT THE SPACE LOADING PLATFORM, GEORGIE! WATCH THE KID WHILE I'M GONE!
DAN BARRY 3-10
...AT THE SPACESHIP PLATFORMS..
HI, BOYS! WHAT'S THE TROUBLE?
IT'S MACK PUNTO AGAIN, BOSS!... HE'LL RUIN OUR RACKET!
HE'S TRYIN' TO STIR UP TROUBLE!... SAYS HE'S TIRED OF GIVING YOU A RAKE-OFF!

HELLO, MACK! HOW ARE YOU?
A LOT INTERESTED IN MY HEALTH YOU ARE, BOSS PUNCH!
I HEAR YOU'RE UNHAPPY, MACK! HERE! ...TAKE THE WIFE OUT TONIGHT! HAVE A GOOD TIME!
KEEP YOUR MONEY, PUNCH! IT'S BLOOD MONEY... MONEY FROM THE SPACESHIP CARGOES YOU'VE HIJACKED!... MONEY EXTORTED FROM US CARGO-LOADERS!
O.K., MACK! NO HARD FEELINGS...
..HUH, MACK?
ALL RIGHT, BOYS! ...LET'S DRAG HIM OVER TO THAT JET CARGO TRUCK!
MOMENTS LATER..
ACCIDENT DOWN AT THE LOADING DOCKS! STEP ON IT!
HOW'D IT HAPPEN?
HE MUST'VE WALKED TOO CLOSE TO THE JET EXHAUST OF A CARGO TRUCK...
HE'S HURT PRETTY BAD!
WELL, PUNCH! ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR LOADING CREW HAS MET WITH AN 'ACCIDENT'!
YEAH! CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL ON THIS JOB! TOO BAD!
PRETTY SURE OF YOURSELF — AREN'T YOU, PUNCH?
YOU WON'T BE WHEN THE CRIME COMMISSION STARTS GRILLING YOU TOMORROW!
CUT IT OUT, BOYS! YOU'RE HURTING MY FEELINGS!
THEY'VE BEEN QUESTIONING THE BOSS FOR TWO HOURS NOW... OOP... HERE HE COMES!
...THINK THIS MAYOR'S CRIME COMMITTEE HAS ANYTHING ON US, GEORGIE?
HIYA, BOYS! WHAT A PICNIC! THOSE JOKERS DIDN'T HAVE A SHRED OF EVIDENCE ON ME!
YOU MEAN THEY WON'T BE BOTHERING US ANY MORE?
NAH — THEY STILL GOT QUESTIONS TO ASK! THEY TOLD ME NOT TO PLAN ANY TRIPS FOR THE PRESENT...
HAW! BUT THEY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT TRIPS TO THE PAST!
FLASH GORDON
MAYBE THESE MICRO-RECORDS CAN SHOW ME A WAY TO THROW A SCARE INTO THE LAW!
CHEE, BOSS! A 20TH CENTURY NEWSPAPER!
YEAH... WHEN THEY STILL HAD WARS!
HMM! I THINK I SEE JUST WHAT I NEED!
GEORGIE! GO BACK TO THE TIME-CASE AND GET MR. MURLIN! QUICK!
SNAP

HERE'S WHISKERS, BOSS!
HELLO, MR. MURLIN! I CALLED YOU OUT OF THE PAST TO LET YOU HAVE YOUR DAUGHTER BACK!
OH, FATHER!
CHILD! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HOLD IT! BEFORE YOU GET THE KID BACK, YOU GOTTA HELP ME OUT!
DAN BARRY 3-17
JUST ONE LITTLE FAVOR, MR. MURLIN! WE'LL TAKE A SHORT HOP TO EUROPE!
I WANT YOU TO SEND ME BACK TO THE PAST!.. TO THE TIME OF WORLD WAR II!
EUROPE...1945!
FINALLY! THE PRODUCT OF YEARS OF RESEARCH! BOTULINUS TOXIN!
THIS CAN TRULY BE THE SECRET WEAPON TO END THE WAR!
IN THIS AEROSOL GAS FORM... AN OUNCE COULD KILL MILLIONS... WIPE OUT A CITY!
JA!
DOCTOR?... THOSE EXPLOSIONS! WHAT HAPPENED?
DEAD! SABOTAGE! WHO DID IT?
...THERE IS NO ONE HERE!
DAN BARRY 3-18
COPR. 1983 KING FEATURES SYNDICATE, Inc., WORLD RIGHTS RESERVED.
SOMEONE HAS SHOT THE DOCTORS!
A SPY!
BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE DOOR TO THIS LABORATORY! WE SAW NO ONE COME OR LEAVE!
HAW! LOOK WHAT I BROUGHT BACK FROM THE 20TH CENTURY, GEORGIE! A GAS BOMB THAT CAN WIPE OUT A WHOLE CITY!
DAN BARRY 3-19
THAT TIME-CASE IS SOME GIMMICK, HUH, BOSS?
YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WANT! NOW YOU WILL LET MY DAUGHTER AND ME GO FREE!
GO FREE?... YEAH! ...SURE! BUT I WANT A COUPLE MORE FAVORS FIRST!
YOU HAVE GONE BACK ON YOUR WORD TO RELEASE MY CHILD! HAVE YOU NO HONOR, SIR?
GEORGIE! HONOR MR. MURLIN BY SHOWING HIM BACK TO HIS TIME-CASE! THEN YOU CAN RELIEVE THE GUARD WHO'S WATCHING IT!
GUARD? WHAT GUARD?
YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T TELL ANYONE TO WATCH THE TIME-CASE?
KEEP YOUR EYE ON THESE TWO, YOU BOOB!... I'M GOING TO GET OVER THERE MYSELF!
DAN BARRY 3-20
WHAT'SA MATTER, BOSS? YOU THINK THAT FLASH GORDON CHARACTER WILL TRY TO SNEAK THROUGH?
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FLASH GORDON
KEEP AN EYE ON THOSE TWO AND PRAY THAT FLASH GORDON HASN'T COME THROUGH THE TIME-CASE YET!
DAN BARRY 3-21
DON'T WORRY, BOSS! IF THAT GORDON GUY DOES COME...
...I'LL KNOW HOW TO HANDLE 'IM! ... I'LL... I'LL... ULP..
I'VE GOT AN AEROCAB OUTSIDE THE WINDOW!... WE'VE GOT TO BEAT 'BOSS' PUNCH TO THE TIME-CASE!
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...GEORGIE! I CAME BACK TO...
...GEORGIE!
...THAT AEROCAB PULLING AWAY...
...IT'S GORDON! @$#*%! HE SLIPPED THROUGH THE TIME-CASE!
AND GOT MURLIN AND THE KID!
...BOYS!
BOYS! GET OUT THE BLUE AEROCAB — THE HIGH-POWERED JOB! WE GOTTA CATCH THAT GORDON GUY — BUT QUICK!
RIGHT, BOSS!
LET'S GO!
FLASH! THERE IS A VERY SWIFT VEHICLE BEARING DOWN UPON US!
IT'S PROBABLY BOSS PUNCH!
QUICK! EVERYONE OUT!
JUST A FEW MORE YARDS... WE'LL BE SAFE INSIDE THE TIME-CASE!
THEY'RE SHOOTING!
RUN, MURLIN! I'LL KEEP THEM BACK!
FLASH!
BLANG
OKAY — HOLD IT! I NEED THE OLD MAN ALIVE!
QUICKLY, MARILYN! INTO THE TIME-CASE! CALL DALE... ANYONE!
...I WILL ...UGH... FOLLOW...
HURRY, FATHER.
HE'S LIFTING FLASH UP THROUGH THE MACHINE!
STOP HIM!
MARILYN! PULL HIM UP! QUICKLY!
NOW YOU, FATHER! HURRY!
HELP ME UP!
NO YA DON'T, WHISKERS!
GRAB THAT BOX, BOYS!
WE GOT IT!
IT WON'T BUDGE!
LET'S CRAWL THROUGH IT!
HEY!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WHERE IS IT?
IT'S GONE!
...YEAH! IT'S GONE BACK TO THE PAST — BUT THE OLD MAN IS STILL HERE!

LISTEN, MURLIN! I'M THROUGH FOOLING WITH YOU!
I NEED THAT TIME-CASE AND I MEAN TO GET IT!
I'VE BEEN TREATING YOU LIKE A GENTLEMAN, BUT I CAN GET ROUGH... PLENTY ROUGH!
I'VE GOT WAYS TO MAKE YOU DO THINGS, AND...
BOSS! BOSS! ONE OF THE BOYS HAS BLABBED TO THE CITY PROSECUTOR... ABOUT THE RACKETS... MAC PUNTO... EVERYTHING!
THEY'RE COMIN' TO GET YOU, BOSS!

FLASH GORDON

WELL, MR. MAYOR! ONE OF PUNCH'S STOOGES HAS STARTED SINGING! WE'VE GOT TESTIMONY THAT PUNCH IS A MURDERER!
THIS WILL BREAK PUNCH'S ROCKET-LOADING RACKET WIDE OPEN! I WANT YOUR MEN...
...EXCUSE ME!
BZZZZ

HELLO, PUNCH! SO THE UNDERWORLD GRAPEVINE'S PICKED UP THE NEWS ALREADY?
YEAH -- AN' I GOT NEWS FOR YOU, MISTER MAYOR! KEEP YOUR @#*@ #34 COPS AWAY FROM HERE, OR I'LL WIPE OUT THIS WHOLE CITY,

LISTEN, MAYOR! I HAVE A SECRET WEAPON... A POISON THAT CAN WIPE OUT THIS WHOLE CITY!
WHO ARE YOU KIDDING, PUNCH? THERE ISN'T A LABORATORY ON EARTH THAT COULD MAKE SUCH STUFF WITHOUT BEING SPOTTED BY THE WORLD INSPECTION COMMISSION!

BILLY O-MART
HERE IS YOUR PURCHASE FROM THE THEATRICAL SUPPLY SHOP SIR! PLEASE COUNT YOUR CHANGE!
IT'S ABOUT TIME! I'VE BEEN WAITING A GOOD FIVE MINUTES!

LOOK AT ME! A PERFECT DOUBLE FOR MR. MURLIN! ...HOPE THE MUSTACHE DOESN'T FALL OFF!
AAAH, PUNCH! YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN AN ACTOR!
THEATRICAL COSMETICS
THE SCENE IS SET... NOW OUT ONTO THE STAGE!
FLASH GORDON WILL COME LOOKING FOR ME SOONER OR LATER!
AHA! HERE COMES THE 'ORB' — RIGHT ON CUE! SEARCHING FOR 'ME' — NO DOUBT!!
DAN BARRY 4-3
FLASH!! HERE I AM, FLASH! CAN YOU SEE ME?
I ESCAPED FROM BOSS PUNCH, FLASH!... HURRY! GET ME AWAY FROM HERE! BRING THE TIME-CASE TO ME — HURRY! I'LL BE WAITING!
DAN BARRY 4-4
YEAH!... I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU, FLASH GORDON! — ME! BOSS PUNCH! AND WHEN YOU COME, WE'LL SETTLE A FEW ACCOUNTS!
HOW'D YA LIKE THAT? HANDCUFFING ME TO THE OLD MAN SO'S HE SHOULDN'T ESCAPE!... THE BOSS THINK I'M DUMB OR SOMETHING?
HO-HUM! I MIGHT AS WELL WATCH SOME ENTERTAINMENT ON THE MOVIEVISION!
PHOOEY! NO JUDO MATCHES!... MOVIEVISION SURE MAKES YOU GROGGY!
DAN BARRY 4-6
EEYAWNN!! ...SURE DROWSY.
...IMAGINE HANDCUFFS!
...THINK I'M DUMB?
...OR SOMETHIN?
ZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZ
BRR-RRING!
...OOP! ..MUST'VE FALLEN ASLEEP! ...TELEVIEWER RINGING...
BRR-RRING
...MUST BE BOSS PUNCH... IF HE KNEW I WAS SLEEPIN'...
OWCH!
DAN BARRY 4-7
HEY! WHAT IS THIS? I'M HANDCUFFED TO A PIPE...
...A PIPE!!
HEY! THE OLD MAN... HE'S GONE!
THE TELEVIEWER'S STOPPED RINGING! I'LL BET IT WAS BOSS PUNCH! HE'LL BLOW A FUSE WHEN HE HEARS THE OLD MAN GAVE ME THE SLIP!
DAN BARRY 4-8
...MAKE A SAP OUT OF ME, WILL HE?
...I'M GOING TO TRACK THAT OLD MAN DOWN... AND WHEN I DO...
I-I'M GOING TO KILL HIM!
...JUST LIKE THE TIME-CASE PREDICTED!!?

SO WE FINALLY GOT THE GOODS ON HIM!
I'VE BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME FOR THIS!... NOW LET'S PICK UP BOSS PUNCH!
...THINK WE'LL HAVE TROUBLE, CHIEF?
DAN BARRY 4-9
POLICE
WELL!...PUNCH THREATENED TO WIPE OUT THE CITY WITH A GAS BOMB!
...A GAS BOMB!..HOW RIDICULOUS CAN YOU GET?
THERE! IT'S ALL SET TO GO OFF IN A FEW HOURS!
...WHERE ARE GEORGIE AND OLD MAN MURLIN? ...WELL...THEY CAN GO TO BLAZES WITH THE REST OF THE CITY!
BOSS PUNCH!

...HIS APARTMENT IS ON THE SEVENTIETH FLOOR!... BRING PUNCH DOWN, BOYS! WE'RE GOING TO PUT HIM AWAY FOR LIFE!
HAW-HAW! TOO BAD I CAN'T WAIT AROUND TO SEE THE GAS BOMB GO OFF AND PUT THEM AWAY! I'M GOING TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE 900 YEARS IN THE PAST!
...I CAN'T FIND GEORGIE AND THE OLD MAN! ...BAH! I'LL LEAVE THE BOOB BEHIND!
HI! MISTER MURLIN!
DAN BARRY 4-10
...YOUR DAUGHTER IS WAITING FOR YOU! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
COMING, FLASH! COMING!
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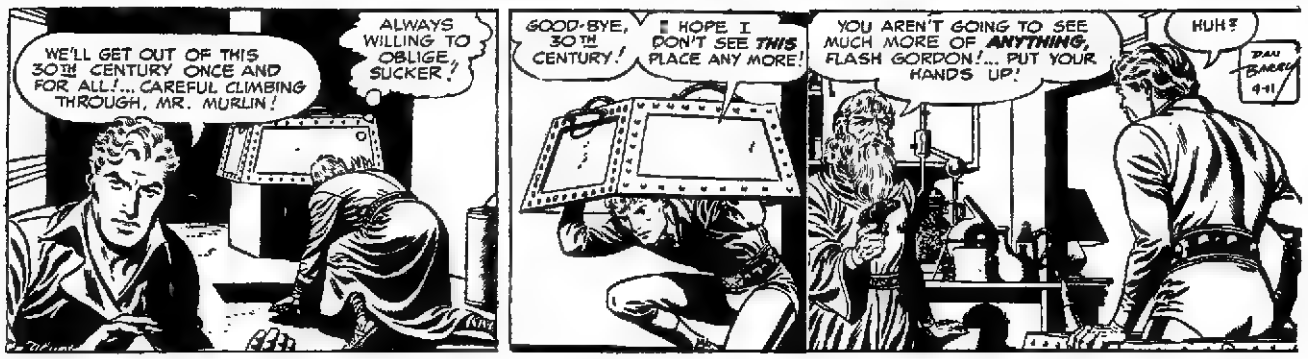
WE'LL GET OUT OF THIS 30TH CENTURY ONCE AND FOR ALL!... CAREFUL CLIMBING THROUGH, MR. MURLIN!
ALWAYS WILLING TO OBLIGE, SUCKER!
GOOD-BYE, 30TH CENTURY! I HOPE I DON'T SEE THIS PLACE ANY MORE!
YOU AREN'T GOING TO SEE MUCH MORE OF ANYTHING, FLASH GORDON!... PUT YOUR HANDS UP!
HUH?
DAN BARRY 4-11

IF BOSS PUNCH FINDS OUT I LET THE OLD GEEZER ESCAPE, I'LL CATCH IT!
WHERE IS THAT OLD MAN?
...MAKE A FOOL OUTTA ME, WILL HE?
WHERE IS HE?
WHEN I FIND HIM— I'LL BLAST HIM—SO HELP...
AHA!
DAN BARRY 4-13

AHA! THE TIME-CASE! I'LL BET THAT'S WHERE THE OLD MAN WENT! NOW I'VE GOT HIM!
DAN BARRY 4-14
YOU'VE BEEN A THORN IN MY SIDE LONG ENOUGH, FLASH GORDON! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS A...
HELLO, MR. MURLIN!
GEORGIE! WAIT!...
DROP THAT GUN! DROP IT, I SAID!

GEORGIE! GEORGIE! NO!
DAN BARRY 4-15
...YOU BOOB! ... YOU CRAZY, STUPID BOOB...
...FLASH! IT'S JUST AS THE TIME-CASE PICTURED...
...GEORGIE MURDERING MR. MURLIN!...ONLY IT HAPPENS TO BE BOSS PUNCH... DISGUISED AS MURLIN!
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IT HAPPENED JUST AS THE TIME-CASE PREDICTED!
...GEORGIE KILLING MR. MURLIN!...ONLY IT'S NOT MR. MURLIN!
PUNCH!
DAN BARRY 4-16
I'M SORRY, PUNCH! FORGIVE ME! I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS YOU! HONEST!
I WANTED TO GET MR. MURLIN! I WANTED TO PUT HIM AWAY FOR KEEPS!
UNHAPPILY FOR YOU GEORGIE, MR. MURLIN STILL LIVES!
WELL, MURLIN! THE PREDICTION WAS CORRECT... BUT, AS IT TURNS OUT, IT'S BOSS PUNCH... NOT YOU... WHO IS GEORGIE'S VICTIM!
BOSS! BOSS! WHY'D YA HAVE TO BE WEARIN' THIS DISGUISE? WHY? WHY?... SOBS ...I NEVER WOULD O' HURT YA, BOSS... HONEST!
COME! I MUST PUT THE AIR-TIGHT GLASS PLATE OVER THE TIME-CASE OPENING! ...OBSERVE!
DAN BARRY 4-17
THE CASE IS FILLING WITH GAS!
...YES! THE CITY... 900 YEARS IN THE FUTURE... IS BLANKETED WITH THE DEADLY POISON GAS!
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YOU MEAN... THE CITY OF THE FUTURE THAT WE JUST LEFT IS COMPLETELY POISONED BY THAT GAS!
YES! PUNCH PREPARED A BOTULINUS TOXIN TIME BOMB!
DAN BARRY 4-18
I KNEW OF THE BOMB, BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHERE IT WAS HIDDEN! I WARNED THE MAYOR OF IT, AND HE HAS TAKEN PROPER STEPS TO EVACUATE THE POPULATION!
... THE CITY IS DEAD, BUT ITS PEOPLE ARE ALIVE... AND THANKS TO PROVIDENCE, SO ARE MY DAUGHTER AND I!
WELL, FLASH! THE CITY OF THE FUTURE WAS BLANKETED BY POISON GAS AS PREDICTED... BUT THE PEOPLE WERE EVACUATED IN TIME!
YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT BEING SHOT BY GEORGIE ANY MORE, MURLIN! IT'S ALL IN THE PAST NOW!
YES! AND NOW MARILYN AND I MUST RETURN TO THE PAST— WHERE WE BELONG! AND I WILL TAKE THE TIME-CASE WITH ME! I HAVE LEARNED THE FUTURE IS NOT TO BE TAMPERED WITH!
DAN BARRY 4-20
GOODBYE, FLASH...
GOODBYE, DALE...
...AND GOOD LUCK!
POOF

Playwright for Paper Actors

The Autobiography of Allen Saunders

Allen Saunders is one of the most significant names in comic-strip history. Not only have his creations been quality features, immensely popular with the public and influential amongst his fellow cartoonists and writers, but his very life and career have paralleled that of strip history itself.

Born in the last century but active yet today, Saunders met early cartooning greats; contributed to pioneer publications; created several important strips; wrote in a manner that influenced a generation of comic scripters; and nurtured writers and artists who still dominate the field today. His strips included *Big Chief Wahoo*, *Steve Roper*, *Mary Worth*, and (revealed here for the first time publicly) *Kerry Drake* and *Dan Dunn*.

His fascinating career also included work in Chautauqua touring theatrical companies in the twilight-days of that American phenomenon, and writing for the legendary mystery pulp magazines.

Exclusively for *NEMO*, Allen Saunders is sharing his life story. His homey and folksy autobiography will trace not only his own varied career, but also the unfolding growth of the American comic strip, related forms of popular entertainment, and inside stories of three-quarters of a century of America itself—especially parts and types of an America that seems long, and sadly, gone. Also here is the interesting account of how we got where we are.

Playwright for Paper Actors, fully illustrated, will continue in succeeding issues of *NEMO*.

—REM

—CHAPTER ONE—

A Hoosier Boyhood

The five-year-old boy pressed his nose against the clothing-store window and watched with rapt attention as the itinerant artist dipped a wide brush in white house-paint and pulled it slowly down the canvas to make a waterfall. The wide brush was then exchanged for a smaller, pointed one, dipped in black paint and used to sketch a stick figure seated on a rock beside the falls.

The leg-lines were bent to show that the man was sitting down. More quick strokes of the brush and a second figure appeared, walking toward the shade of a tree in the foreground.

The boy turned and ran on short fat legs to the harness shop next door. To the balding, apron-clad man astride a stitching-horse he cried: "Daddy! I just learned to draw *people*!"

My father smiled indulgently as he rolled thread on his thigh to make a "wax-end" with which to sew the bridle clamped in the jaws of the stitching-horse.

"Maybe we've got a chromo artist in the family," he chuckled. "They make a lot of money, judging from the way that one next door throws it away!"

And throwing money away was exactly how the artist amused himself every afternoon. He piled dust from the unpaved village street over a handful of coins—pennies, nickels, and, on days when business in instant art had been unusually good, a dime or two. Excited boys lined up a hundred feet away. Older ones were given a handicap. They had to position themselves at the Midland Railroad tracks, 50 feet behind their younger competitors. At a signal from the artist there was a mad race and a bruising scramble for the coins. Like in an *Andy Capp* panel, the only thing assembled spectators could see was a cloud of dust from which protruded flying arms and legs.

I was too young to risk the mayhem involved in participation, but I got the message: Artists are impressively prosperous.

It was the chromo artist's technique for depicting the human figure, however, which impressed me most. A dot for the head, sometimes with a short line drawn through it to make a hat brim. A thick line for the body. A triangle for a skirt if the subject was female. Four lines, variously bent to indicate action, to make arms and legs. I could hardly wait to get home and try to duplicate that brush magic.

I had already started a habit that was to be mine for a long lifetime: reading the "funny pages." My father's cousin was a hotel clerk in Lebanon, Indiana, a county seat town where I was born in 1899. On weekends the hotel would be filled with "drummers," traveling salesmen forced to suffer a boring two days before hitting the sales trail again. They bought all the Sunday papers obtainable and left them strewn on the lobby floor. Cousin Walter unfailingly salvaged the comic sections and made a roll of them to pass along to me and my older brother, Rush. He continued the practice as long as the hotel stayed in business and our home became a magnet for young comics fans.

To avoid having to walk through a house ankle-deep in comic sections, my mother eventually devised a system. Using an awl and wax-end thread, she stitched the pages into huge books, forerunner of today's comic books (which, in the beginning, were previously published comic pages reduced to convenient size). Constant handling of the massive volumes caused the pages to break on the middle-fold crease and it required much trial and error to match halves properly, thus adding a kind of puzzle-solving bonus to the joy of reading.

I had learned to read and print almost as soon as I started walking. Mother had been a teacher in one-room country schools before marrying Dad, after a seven-year courtship, and she taught me to read at the breakfast table, using the instructions on a box of a then-popular cereal, "Egg-O-See," as a textbook.

Reading at that tender age didn't necessarily mean understanding what I read. At one time I set out to read the Bible, starting with the "begats." I soon abandoned the project, but some phrases stuck in my memory. One day I quoted a bit of philosophy to my mother and solemnly assured her it was "from a possum in the Bible." When she expressed doubt that the marsupial was mentioned in the Scriptures, I triumphantly opened the Old Testament and pointed to a chapter title—"Psalms."

When I came home from watching the chromo artist, however, I felt completely capable of turning out my own "funnies."

To keep me quiet while she made clothes for Rush and me and our baby sister, Evelyn, my mother often adjusted the drop-leaf on her sewing-machine to a slant, gave me crayons and pieces of scrap paper and I doodled the hours away.

Now, with my newfound mastery of the human figure, I ruled the paper into a dozen blocks and did a story, illustrated with leaping, running, gesturing stick figures. The plots always climaxed in a fist fight, with blood spurting from squashed noses and, in the last panel, the losing fighter flying

through the air, trailed by a "balloon" in which was firmly lettered, "POW!." Some 30 years later I would employ a slightly diluted version of this violence in syndicated adventure strips.

We lived but a short time in Advance, Indiana. (That is AD-vance, please, not ad-VANCE.) But it was a good place to start forming first impressions about colorful people, to absorb by osmosis the outlook on life which the Hoosier ambience has seemed to instill in those destined to write, especially if they end up doing text for comic strips. The town had its quota of offbeat characters and they never allowed gaining a livelihood to interfere with almost daily practical jokes, which were gleefully described in the weekly newspaper. The paper was called *The Hustler*, a noun which at that point in linguistic history had neither of the meanings current today. The pranks usually led to some luckless citizen being dunked in the Main Street horse-trough and after watching these antics I would hurry home to incorporate them in my comic pages.

All my life I seem to have been present when practical jokes were played, more often as a spectator than as a participant. Later I will describe a sequence of highly imaginative japes which hastened the demise of a metropolitan newspaper and shunted me into the full-time profession of producing syndicated comics.

Second only to a compulsion to draw and write, I have always had an insatiable appetite for appearing before an audience and Advance gave me a start in that activity. School officials were lenient and I had been allowed to start in the second grade before I was six. Even in the lower grades there were declamation contests and I recall wheedling my teacher on one occasion into letting me compete. She stood me on her desk and I recited, with gestures and illustrative body movements and garbled pronunciation which had led my father to nickname me "Dutchman":

Dere was onct a widdle wobbin
An' his head was allus bobbin'
He remocked as he dobbled up a wuhm:
"I have eaten all your bruvvers
An' a haffa dozen uvvers,
But dolly how dey tickled when dey squhmed!"

Laughter, applause, yells, and whistles rattled the windows. And a four-star ham was born.

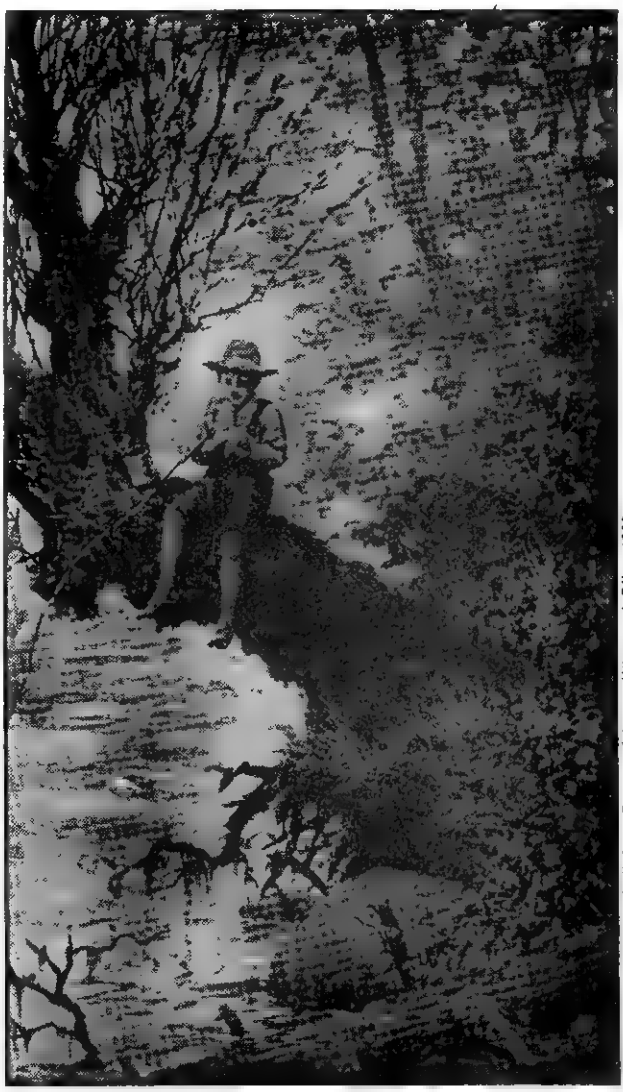
I made another discovery in Advance, a depressing one which should have discouraged me from looking forward to a career that had anything to do with art. Rush and I had mumps at the same time. The accompanying earache was so severe that our screams as we rolled on the floor disturbed the neighborhood one day and, with the hope of cutting down the decibels, no doubt, Dad brought us each a gift when he came home from the shop that night: a catcher's mitt for Rush and a wooden box of rancid-smelling watercolor paints for me.

The results were what had been hoped for. Rush started silently bouncing a ball off the sitting-room wall and I became absorbed in turning out a funny-page . . . in living color! When I had finished my first masterpiece I proudly displayed it to my mother. And she pointed out that the faces of all my characters were green. I was color blind.

Years later, when I was starting to make it as a professional chalk-talker, I had to tie a string around the stick of flesh-colored lecturer's crayon to distinguish it from the green one. But the string was continually slipping off and I'd end up by limning more green-faced ghouls. So I eventually gave up and for years have used only black markers with broad nibs.

We didn't stay long in Advance. In fact, we seldom kept the same address for more than a year or two. My paternal grandfather, John R. Saunders, a Civil War veteran who served in both cavalry and infantry regiments, had left the family profession, school-teaching, to open an insurance and real estate office in Lebanon. He made a practice of buying rather unproductive farms, turning them over to my father to develop, then selling them. Which meant that we moved almost every second or third March 1st to a new home.

This may have been a trial to my parents, but for me it was a boon. The inhabitants we suceeded often left behind an attic or woodshed stacked with old magazines, which sometimes carried a few illustrated jokes. I spent hours when I should have been doing chores—pumping water for the stock or carrying in stovewood—poring over the cartoons and dreaming of the day when I might just possibly see my own work in print.



Collection of Rick Marschall, from *Poems of James Whitcomb Riley*, 1898.

The family's almost itinerant life meant that Rush and Evelyn and I attended a succession of Indiana schools, one-room and consolidated, in villages like Fayette, Royalton, Valley Mills, and Stringtown.

Rush and I finished "common school" in the Stringtown one-roomer and I recall the years on that farm with special pleasure. Dad and Mother took the week's butter and eggs to Lebanon every Saturday afternoon. The eggs went to my Uncle Matt's "poultry house" and the butter, under exclusive contract, to "Red" Immel's popcorn wagon. The income was important to my parents, but for me the weekly trip had another reward: There was a Carnegie Library in Lebanon! This opened a marvelous new world for me. I was allowed to take out three books at a time. Riding home in the back seat of the carriage, I could usually finish one. And, sprawled on the stairs to unbutton my shoes and, in slow motion, change out of "town" clothes, I often got well into a second before doing my evening chores.

I read without discrimination, always fiction, everything from Horatio Alger and G.A. Henty to Hugo and Cooper. And I began to feel an urge to put words together.

It was during the Stringtown years, too, that I took a long step down the other of those parallel roads to the profession of writing comic strips. I discovered that I could copy the work of the men who did the "funnies," that my version of Happy Hooligan was a reasonable facsimile of F. Opper's tin-can hatted vagabond. Many art teachers might decry the advice,

but I believe that there is no better way for a youngster to learn comic art than by copying the work of a cartoonist he admires. Eventually he will learn to originate and will develop a style of his own. Even most professionals keep thick indexed files and depend upon them for accuracy, and even for the drawing style itself.

While attending the Stringtown school, destiny apparently led me into the edge of another field which, many years later, would bring the parallel paths of writing and drawing together to make it almost inevitable that I would tell stories in pictorial form. A story strip writer is much like a playwright . . . for two-dimensional actors. And in the coal-shed beside our school-house I became author and director of noon-hour dramas. The scripts were written on ruled tablet paper and handed out to whichever fellow-pupils would abandon "shinny" games—school-yard hockey with a battered tin can for a puck—and "act." The make-up problem was fortuitously solved by the approach of Hallowe'en night. I bought assorted penny falsefaces and my cast members became instant Indians, clowns, witches, and ghosts.

Rush and I started high school in Lebanon. We stabled our buggy-horse in our grandfather's barn. Every Monday noon I visited the hotel and picked up the Sunday comics Cousin Walter had saved for us. Then, too eager to delay reading them until we reached home, I sat in the cold barn and devoured them.

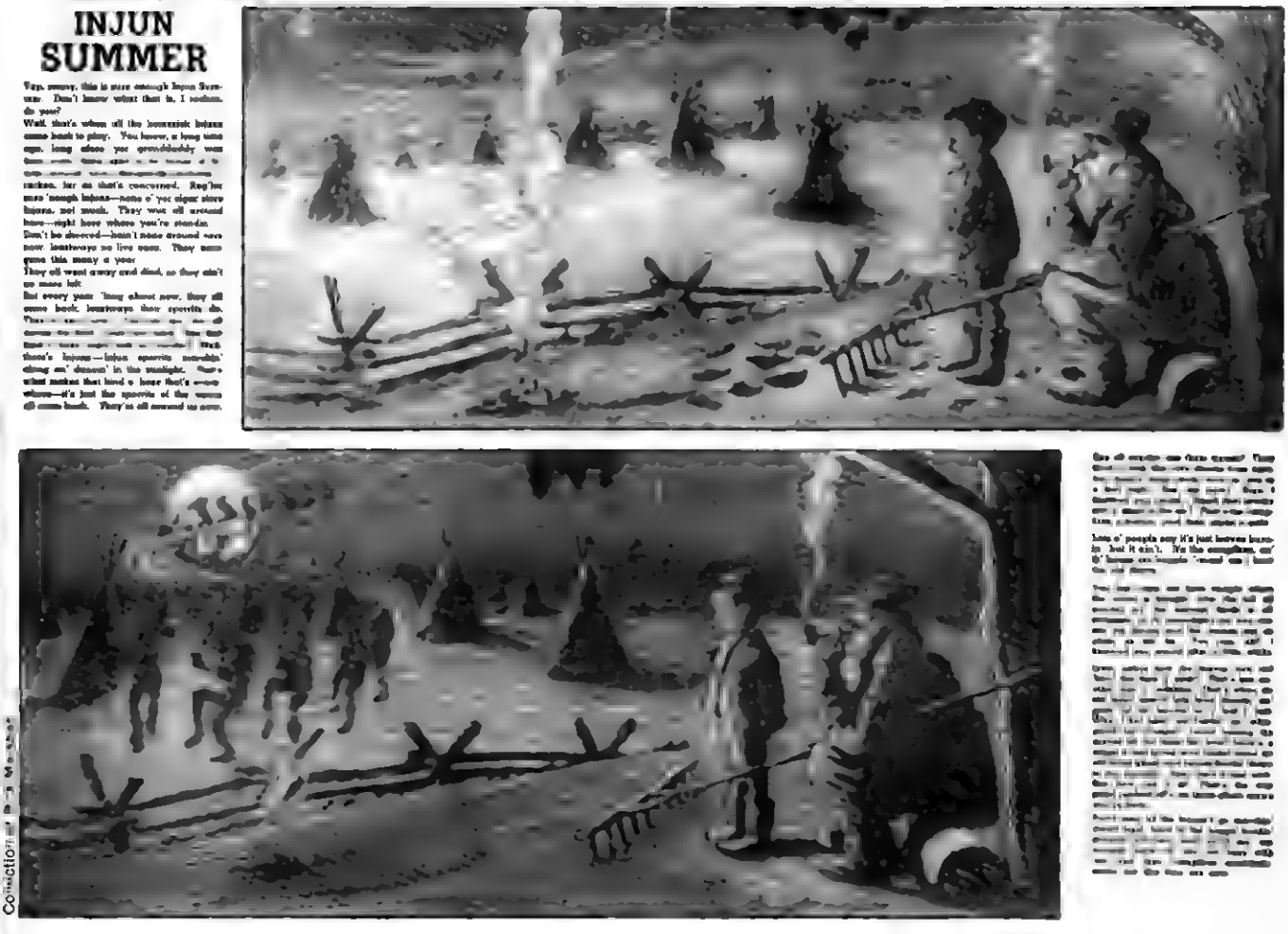
Why didn't I find a more comfortable spot in Grandfather's house nearby? It was warm, almost suffocatingly hot, (even in summer he sat beside a base-burner) and, on an ancient double-bank typewriter, he tapped out reams of articles on local history. But he had remarried in Florida on one of his winter vacations in St. Augustine. Sadie, as she was called affectionately by all members of the family, old and young, had been, predictably, a school-teacher. And she viewed my addiction to reading comics with strong disapproval. "The boy will ruin his mind!," she predicted.

So, for almost a year, I read the comics in secrecy. Then came an incredible about-face in her attitude. The *Indianapolis Star* launched a family strip called *Roger Bean*, by Chic Jackson. It was pure Hoosier humor. And to the amusement of the family both John R. and Sadie became such ardent fans that they had sharp words every morning over who read the paper first. And the certainty that reading comics would inevitably lead to brain damage was never mentioned afterward.

We moved to one of Grandfather's farms near Valley Mills, in the Indianapolis area, where Rush and I continued high school. Rush made the school chorus, but I—to whom music is still a mystery today—found self-expression as an actor. It had nothing to do with talent. There were no auditions. A senior play was traditional and the senior class at Valley had only three members, a boy and two girls. With airy disregard for this fact, the teacher in charge selected a drama about college life, giving feminine leads to the senior girls, the role of a football hero to the burly senior youth and casting me as a dictatorial gridiron coach. I borrowed long pants to replace my knickers and, looking up from the male star's belt-level, screamed orders in what was still a pre-puberty falsetto. The audience didn't seem to find the hilarious incongruity that it was, which probably gave the unwarranted impression that acting was easy. Which explains why, about a dozen years later, I confidently set forth to tour the middle-west in a role written for the great British actor, Sir Beerbohm Tree.

We moved, as usual, after a year to another farm, a few miles from the village of Thorntown. But this farm was not one of Grandfather's short-term investments. It belonged to a wealthy produce dealer, Will Jacques, and the fact that his

John McCutcheon's classic cartoon of Midwestern magic *Injun Summer*. Drawn in 1912, it has been reprinted annually by the *Chicago Tribune*—and in the millions via posters and prints. McCutcheon was a dominant influence on Saunders and two generations of Midwestern cartoonists.



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wife was a cousin to the *Chicago Tribune*'s famous editorial cartoonist, John T. McCutcheon, was one more of those countless strokes of good fortune that have been my lot throughout life.

I had continued drawing for hours every day when I should have been helping my parents or doing schoolwork. I had taken the important step from pencil to pen-and-ink. My father's brother, Harry, a skilled sign-painter who doubled as a commercial artist when letterheads or package designs were needed, had taught me the basics of lettering. But there was no one to tell me whether my efforts were as good as admiring relatives judged them to be, or as bad as surviving samples show they actually were.

Such are the lucky chances in life, however, that this situation was about to be changed. Mrs. Jacques was a dedicated civic worker. She asked her cousin John if he would come to Thorntown and give a program, a chalk-talk, with proceeds to go to a local women's organization. He replied promptly. "For my cousin Rose it would be my pleasure and privilege."

When I heard about the scheduled program I was euphoric. I counted the days, then the hours, until I was seated in the front row in the half-filled high school auditorium. Then I counted the minutes. After a torturing delay the footlights came on and the chairman of the event walked out and raised his hands to stop the buzz of conversation. His expression was forebodingly solemn.

"I knew it all along," I told myself. "Mr. McCutcheon isn't coming."

The chairman explained that Mr. McCutcheon had missed his train in Chicago because of some newly inaugurated experiment called "daylight saving time." However, the speaker was *en route* and, if we wouldn't mind waiting for about an hour. . .

Mind? I would have waited a century!

It was almost 10 o'clock when the speaker walked out on the stage, immaculate in evening clothes and wearing white gloves. He had chartered a special train, with one coach in which he was the only passenger. It was quickly whispered about the auditorium that he had paid $300 for the one-way ride from Chicago to Thorntown. The box office receipts for the program totaled less than $40.

Looking back on McCutcheon's work I have been struck by the fact that he was one of the last editorial cartoonists to achieve fame without being venomous. Like his great contemporary, Jay N. "Ding" Darling, he attacked with gentle humor. Many of his cartoons, like his classic "Injun Summer," which the *Tribune* reprints every fall, were whimsical statements completely non-political in nature. Giants in the field today apparently must be vicious and "go for the jugular" in order to be successful.

After the performance, Mrs. Jacques had a reception for the speaker in her home and I was invited. When I sidled into the crowded living room she led me over to meet him. "Allen draws, too, John," she said by way of introduction.

Characteristically, my idol was gracious. John T. McCutcheon, hunting companion of Theodore Roosevelt in Africa, a friend of kings, the most admired cartoonist of his era, was a gentleman in every way that term implies. He greeted the stammering country boy with a warm smile.

"Send me some of your work," he suggested. "I'd be glad to help you with it if I can."

I imagine every aspiring cartoonist has experienced in his formative years a similar show of interest by an established professional. Seldom have I heard a beginner complain that he was snubbed or given a short, hurried interview. The pros all seem to be compulsive encouragers, possibly because they recall an experience like mine with McCutcheon.

But McCutcheon went further. In the years that followed our meeting I mailed my crude efforts to him. In my files today I still have his comments, handwritten in precise script. On one drawing he wrote: "This is good enough for *Life* or *Judge*. Why don't you send it out?" I did. No sale resulted, but the encouragement was beyond price.

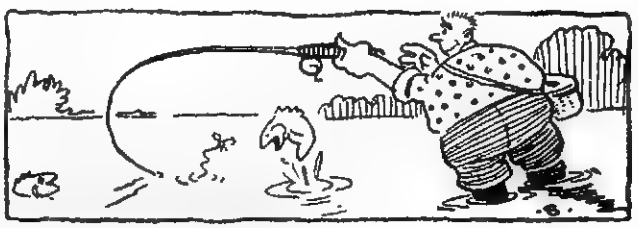
As I started to leave he called me back. "I'm returning to Chicago on a regular train," he said, "and I can't carry that big roll of paper and box of chalks. Would you care to have them?" They rode home with me that night on the buggy seat beside me.

I never saw this compassionate man again, but I have always felt that his kindly interest was a major factor in whatever success I have enjoyed.

I put his chalks and paper to use without delay, first in the high school assembly room, later in churches and in the local movie house where Rush played drums while the pianist underscored action on the silent screen. These chalk-talks were all done free, but in the movie theater I got to watch the picture over and over, a sort of compensation.

In high school I came to realize a fundamental fact of life: If you do just one thing better than your peers, in whatever field, it makes you acceptable and gives you a measure of self-confidence to lean on throughout life. I was hopeless in athletics, an illiterate in music, a completely unattractive possibility as a date, but I had a stamp of approval: "He can draw funny pictures."

I also took another short step toward a career in the writing side of newspaper work, doing "school notes" for the local weekly, the *Argus-Enterprise*. (It suspended publication shortly after I joined the staff of contributors, the first of several



Broadcasting

papers I have apparently helped to kill. In fact, this penchant for giving the kiss of death to papers I worked on later led some wag to refer to me as "the Typhoid Mary of American Journalism.")

Even though I was paid nothing, I was a dubious asset to the *Argus-Enterprise*. My copy was submitted in script and my handwriting was even worse then than it is today. For one thing, my capital L's were indistinguishable from my capital S's, which resulted occasionally in startling gaffes. Like the time I wrote that a visiting minister had addressed the student body on: "Making a Life Versus Making a Living." Readers found it mystifying that the reverend gentleman had spoken on: "Making a Life Versus Making It Swing"!

Upon graduation, I received my first offer of paid employment. Will Jaques asked me to join his office staff at the produce house. Eventually, after I had learned to buy chickens, eggs, butter, junk, and wool, I might reach a salary of $25 a week, in those days a respectable income. I was tempted. Money like that would buy a lot of art supplies, maybe even a typewriter. Dad thought the opportunity was too good to turn down. But Mother held out for me to enter college, remote as the possibility was, and she won.

I started collecting college catalogues, seeking primarily an institution offering a good journalism course. Both the University of Missouri and Wisconsin University seemed ideal. But they were far away and the possible cost of attending ruled them out. As the summer passed, it looked as if I had better reconsider a lifetime in the butter-and-egg business. Then, once more, benign Fate rolled the dice.

My father's brother Joe had a harness shop and shoe store in Crawfordsville, 18 miles away, the site of Wabash College, highly respected as a liberal arts college for men. If I worked part-time for him, I could have free board and room. So, one morning in early September, I put my pasteboard suitcase on the back seat of the family Ford and Dad drove me to what the natives proudly referred to as "The Athens of Indiana."

When he said goodbye, Dad handed me a worn $100 bill, drawn that morning from his meager checking account.

It was more money than I had ever seen before in one piece and I realized what sacrifices the rest of the family would have to make. No words of appreciation seemed adequate. I stood silently holding the bill.

"Learn all you can and have as good a time as you can on as little money as you can," Dad said, turning to grasp the starting crank on the old touring-car.

—CHAPTER TWO—

Cartoonist On Campus

After the first week of classes at the oldest college for men west of the Alleghenies, I realized that Thorntown High School, where my senior class numbered fewer than 30, had excellent teachers. I experienced little difficulty in making the transition from high school to college.

It is not from biased loyalty that I give high marks to the educational system in an Indiana village which claimed a population of 1500. Thorntown High School turned out many a graduate who achieved unusual success in later years. There are 20 members on the board of trustees for Wabash College. During the 20 years I served on it, three were from—you guessed it—old T.H.S.: Eugene Beesley, Chairman of the Board of the Eli Lilly company at the time of his recent death; C.D. LaFollette, financial vice-president of Corning Glass; and, possibly because someone stuffed the alumni ballot-box, a producer of comic strips.

I had made a second discovery by the end of my first month as a freshman: I probably could not have found anywhere a college that provided better instruction for a youth who hoped someday to be a writer. Few institutions of higher learning today, including Wabash, have seperate departments for English Composition and English Literature. There is a reason for this. As in any trade or profession, you learn to do by doing. Learning is not a synonym for being taught. We in English Comp classes were called upon to turn in a theme, an essay or a short story, several times a week. No instructor today wants to check the efforts of budding authors every night after teaching all day. It is a bit more tiring and time-consuming than marking multiple-choice exam papers. But the Wabash Comp faculty did it, apparently without feeling overworked.

Rollo Walter Brown, head of the department and a published novelist himself, carried as heavy a load as did his associates. Your composition was scrupulously studied for grammatical errors. Style was criticized. And if the there was an attempt at fiction, suggestions on plotting technique were offered.

At the opening session of a writing class, Rollo issued a stern warning about faded phrases and trite plots. He would, he assured us, give an automatic F to any composition referring to the "beady-eyed squirrels" on campus, or to a story in which the home team won in the last 10 seconds of play.

Rollo quoted often the words of another English Composition teacher, whose name unfortunately escapes me: "Learn all the rules, then ignore them and write, like a god, to whom personal likes and dislikes are unquestioned law."

Advertised courses in creative writing make exciting claims about their ability to transform an amateur into a prosperous professional. Rollo promised only academic credits. But he turned out many successful pros. One such was Kenyon Nicholson, a relative of novelist Meredith Nicholson. He sold classroom compositions to such prestigeous publications as *Smart Set*, that day's ultra-chic magazine, edited by H.L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan. He later became a successful playwright, with such hits as *The Barker* and *Sailor Beware*.

Peter Edson, for many years a widely syndicated columnist out of Washington, D.C., came to our class after working on a Ft. Wayne daily and viewed the world with the typical cynicism of a journalist. I remember being impressed that he signed his work simply Peter Edson, and I immediately discarded "J.A." and "John Allen" and "J. Allen." For the rest of my life it has been "Allen Saunders." Fortuitously, since it avoids confusion with my strip-writing son, John.

In his first submitted theme, Pete chose to puncture Crawfordsville's civic pride. A number of published writers had once made the town their home. Outstanding among them was General Lew Wallace, who wrote *Ben Hur* under a spreading beech in his front yard and whose study was a show place for occasional visiting tourists. With a modicum of justification, therefore, local citizens proudly referred to the town as "the Athens of Indiana."

Pete submitted a scathing essay titled "Has Anybody Here Seen Athens?" It denigrated the talent of all Montgomery County's literary idols in a lunch-counter dialogue between a visitor and a local Chamber of Commerce stalwart. The final sentence characterized the Athenian protagonist: "He was eating an onion sandwich at the time."

Published in the college monthly, Pete's satire raised the passions of townspeople and for a while the Phi Gamma Delta house telephone brought daily anonymous threats of bodily harm.

Actually, Crawfordsville did have, and has today, an unusual number of gifted professional writers, doubtless inspired in some degree by the example of General Wallace.

Natives tell an amusing story about the general's *Ben Hur*. When the novel was published the dedication read: "To the Wife of My Youth". Mrs. Wallace was not pleased. "It sounds as if you had been married several times, Lew!" So, in subsequent editions, of which there have been many, the inscription is: "To the Wife of My Youth Who Still Abides With Me." If you have a copy with the original dedication it is a first edition and worth a great deal more than the ones in which the author placated his offended spouse.

Regardless of the validity of Crawfordsville's claim to literary fame, the appreciation of the writer's trade I found there

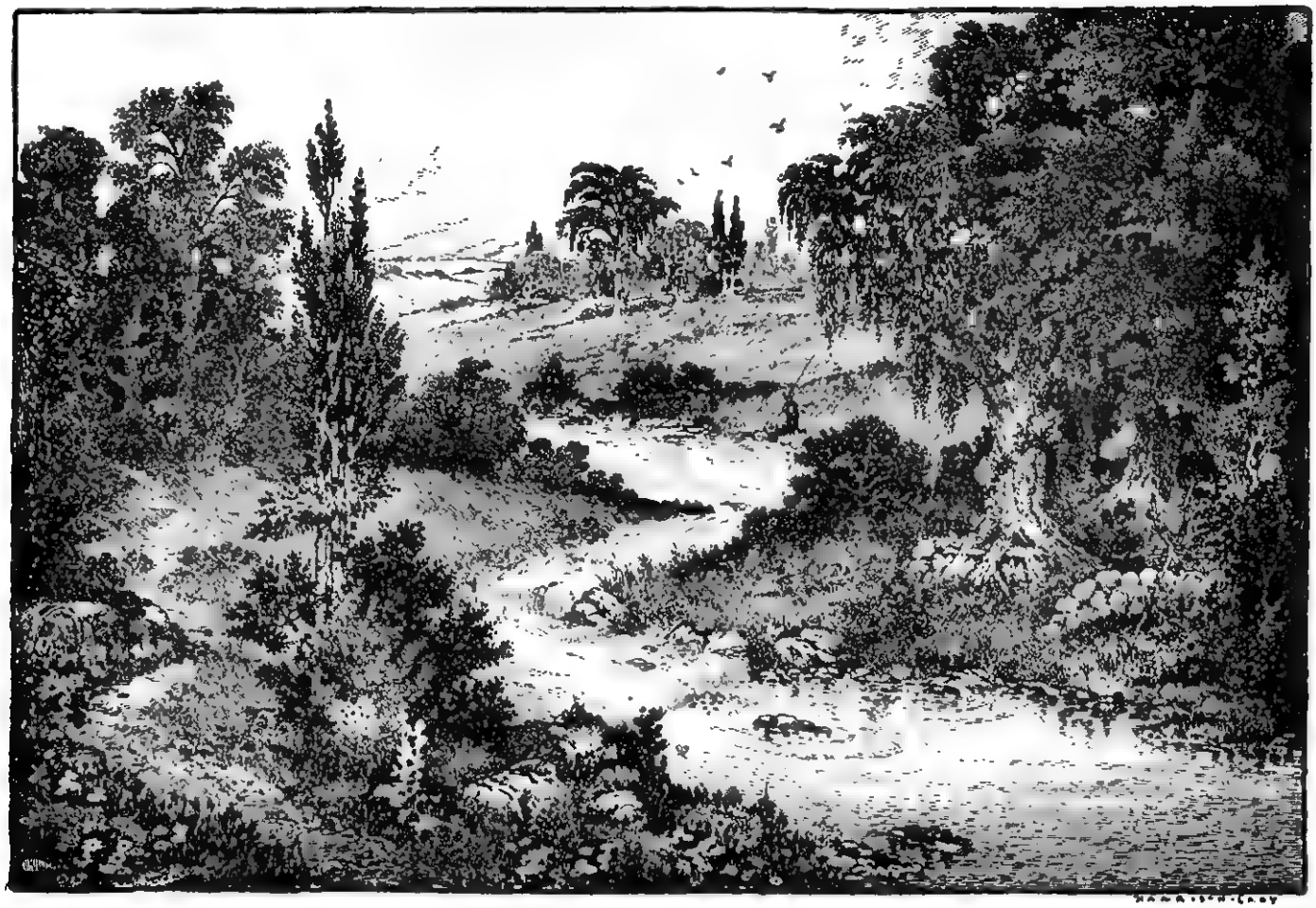
[See SAUNDERS, page 64]

Penman of the Past:

The Roa

AR RISON · {A D Y

d to Wealth



REAL ESTATE—UNIMPROVED AND

Unlike others in this series, Harrison Cady has not been unjustly shrouded by the anonymity of passing years. To every new generation of youngsters, his drawings for the Thornton W. Burgess books (*Peter Rabbit, Mother West Wind,* etc.) become integral parts of childhood memories. His gentle depictions of forest folk are classic cartoon-drawings of simple, innocent themes. If you were lucky enough to have one of the older editions in color, Cady's illustrations are even more precious for their pastel hues. And his long-running comic strip, *Peter Rabbit,* cuddled amidst the pages of the N.Y. *Herald-Tribune,* that most genteel of newspapers, for 29 years.

But preceding much of this activity was different work by the same Harrison Cady—work that, stylistically and thematically, was severely antithetic. As simple as the lines and compositions of the *Peter Rabbit* material were, his earlier creations displayed incredibly detailed crosshatching and shading. And while cute bunnies and talking bugs were always a part of his cartooning lexicon, the early part of his career saw Cady engaged in savage editorial commentary and social criticism, often advancing a rather morose and pessimistic view of the American, and the human, condition.

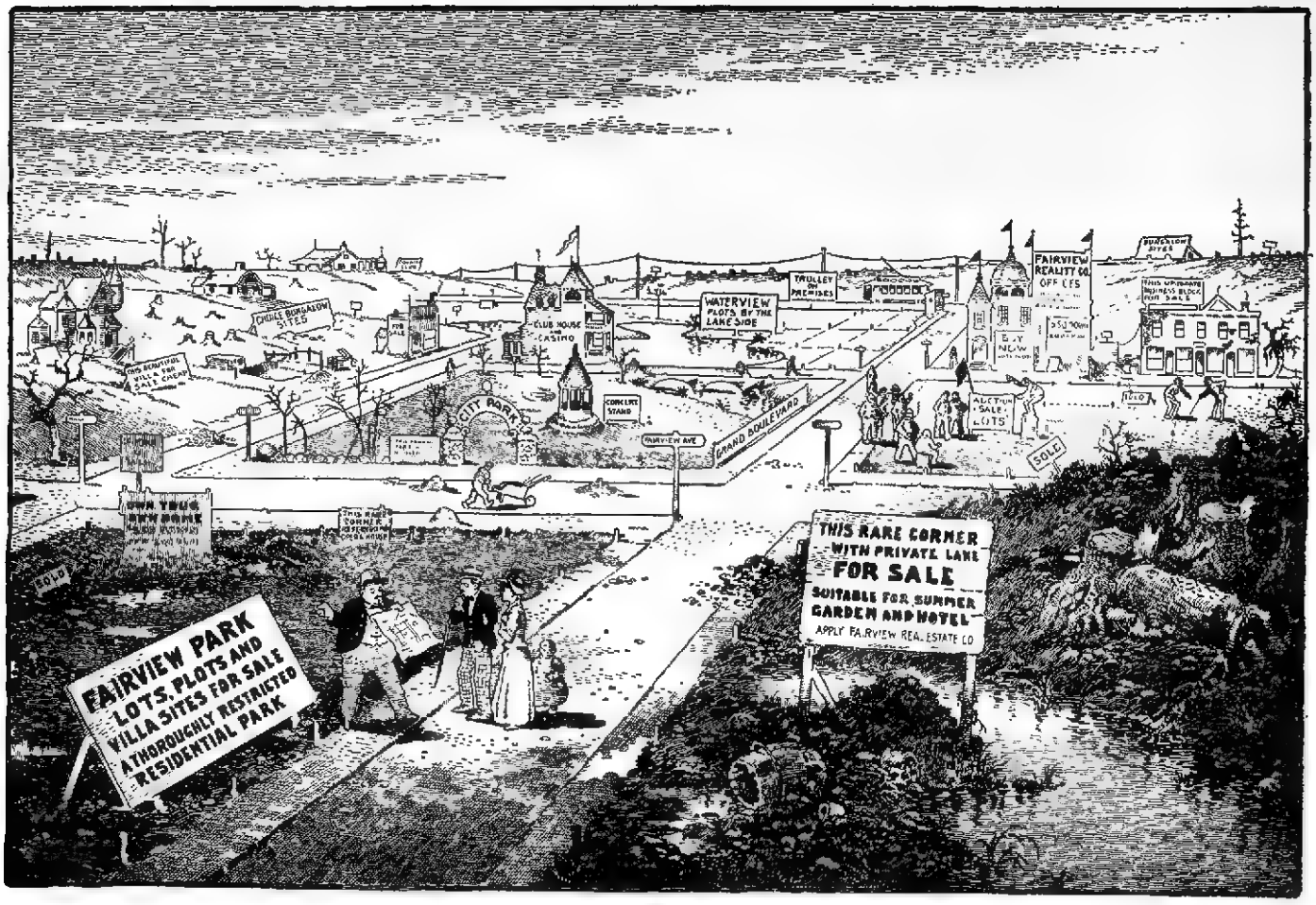
It is this early work of Cady's career that we will illuminate. Walter Harrison Cady was born in Gardner, Mass., in 1877; he died after a crowded career with the pen 93 years later in New York City. When he was 19 he moved from his boyhood home to New York and soon was making sales of illustrations and cartoons to *Harper's Monthly, Truth,* the *Brooklyn Eagle* and, principally, *St. Nicholas Magazine.* Soon he graduated to premier publications like *The Saturday Evening Post, Country Gentleman, Good Housekeeping,* and *The Ladies' Home Journal;* he also drew a strip for the *Philadelphia Press* in 1905.

But it was not until he started drawing regularly for *Life,* about this time, that his style began to assert its individuality (the result of encouragement from editor J.A. Mitchell, a nonpareil nurturer of young talent). Soon Cady's trademark was the use of countless numbers of tiny lines—parallel, hatched, textured—giving an aura of photographic reality (perhaps "engraved" would be a truer approximation) to his otherwise rather stiff and mannered cartoons.

But another spirit was to infuse Cady's work, and it was a spirit abroad in the land—at least, very clearly, the publishing world; and *Life* was a prominent mirror of the mood. After the turn of the century a cynicism, if not an outright pessimism, crept into the American spirit. In part it was a reaction to the heady advances of recent Industrial Revolution dislocations upward and downward. Most certainly it was a manifestation of Guilty Conscience on the part of the Establishment which viewed its contemporary comforts, all of a sudden, in glaring contrast to the miserable conditions of America's Other Half. And there was a certain dose of realization that if problems were not at least addressed, much less solved, ugly things were in store for Things As Usual.

On a larger level it was one of Theodore Roosevelt's proudest but most amorphous achievements that he was able to stave off a likely social revolution in America during his era of influence and power; reform was not only a desirable policy but an urgent antidote. The rich were getting conspicuously richer;

All cartoons, unless otherwise noted, are from the pages of *Life* magazine, 1908-1918.



IMPROVED

monopoly capitalism had replaced private enterprise; politics from the ward level to the marbled chambers was the mere toy of the highest bidder. And of course Roosevelt was not alone in grasping the necessity of some agenda of reform. The average American, even in reasonable isolation, had the crisis at hand conveyed to him; right in his easy chair he was educated by Jacob Riis's photographs

[See CADY, page 42]

Cady Remembered

by Jessie Kahles Straut, daughter of strip pioneer C.W. Kahles

At 24, Harrison Cady had become a successful illustrator, depicting nature with so much fidelity, imagination, and good humor that the editor and owner of *Life*, John Ames Mitchell, invited him: "I want you to be on our staff. I like men who see things that are not there." Cady's drawings and water colors were full of distinctive, amusing detail—clothes on the animal creatures, "something going on all over the place"—yet they had a pleasant, airy feeling with all their lively design and color. "You can spot a Cady instantly," wrote his friend John L. Cooley, who used to have talks with the elderly master at his summer home in Rockport, Massachusetts. Cooley said, "In an era when conversation was a fine art, he more than held his own with the best of them."

I found this to be true when I met my father's early colleague in his two-story balconied studio at 27 West 67th Street, New York in 1952. He was charming at 75—tall, erect, with a white mane and clear blue eyes. He had an expression of thoughtfulness and bright good will. His upturned eyebrows and dark-rimmed glasses brought his own Professor Owl to mind.

Looking at his softly-lighted oil paintings on the walls in New York, I remarked that there seemed to be an oriental quality to them. Mr. Cady happily agreed, saying he loved Chinese paintings. "I want to take one to the next world, if I can only take one thing."

Mr. Cady's wife and friends marveled at the cartoonist's remarkable spirit. He found so much in life to rejoice in that he inspired everyone he met. He spent no time on doom. He was lucky to have lived long and successfully in the age of transition from elegant Victorian manners to 20th century brevity and familiarity. Following his one-man exhibition at the Salmagundi Club, a critic wrote, "Harrison Cady has mastered the art of living."

He said to me, when we reminisced about the years of congenial acquaintance with my father and the Pleiades Club, "Those were the days when the pleasures of life were savored slowly, like a glass of port wine, an ocean voyage, a picture, or a good joke. A painting was hung on the wall not to match the draperies but to fill a need of the soul."

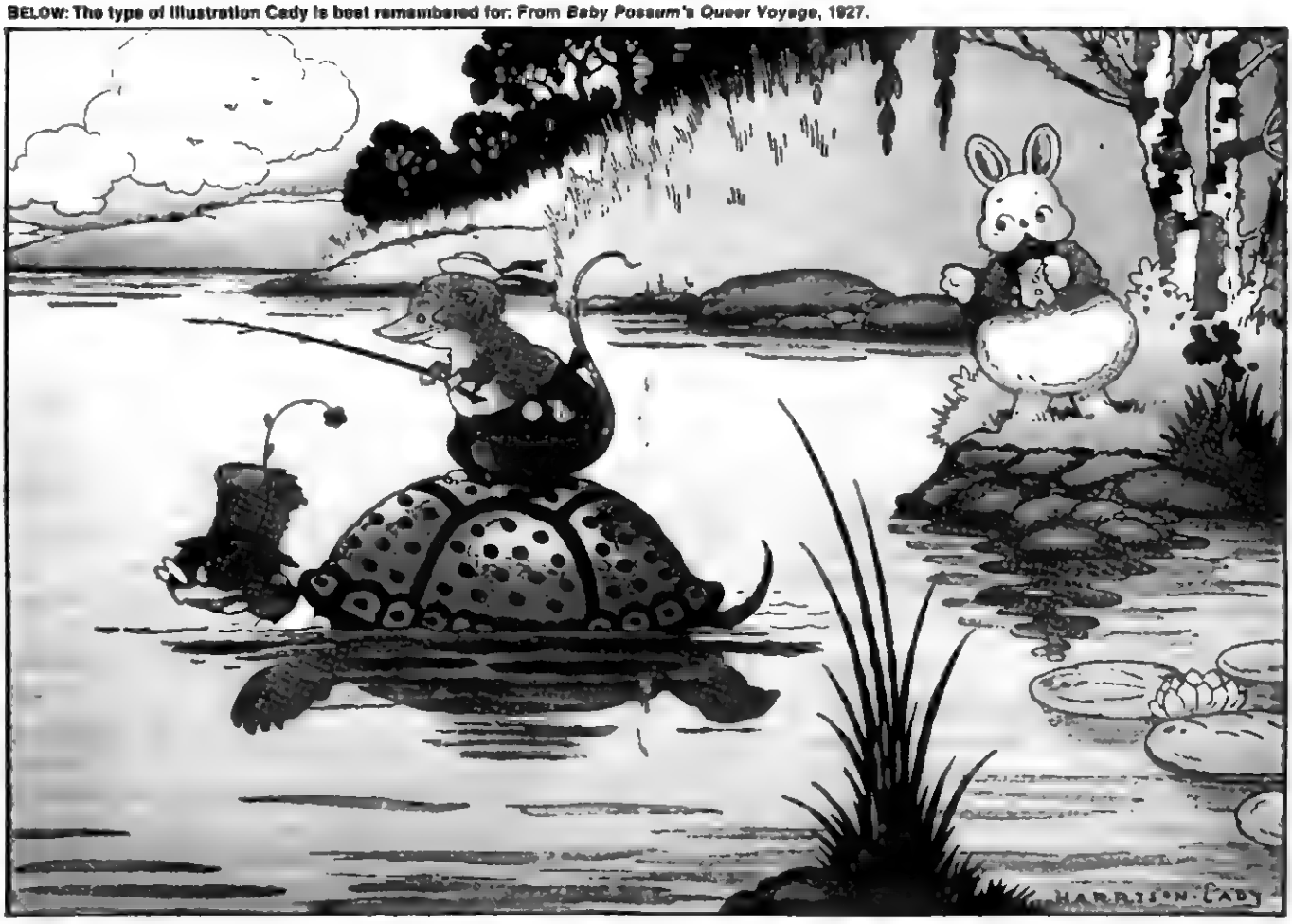
Harrison Cady exhibited oils, water colors, and etchings at the National Academy (winning its Edwin Palmer Memorial Prize), the Pennsylvania Academy, Chicago Art Institute; had one-man shows at the Salmagundi Club, and the MacBeth, Kleeman, and Currier Galleries. He won the Rockport Art Association's Niedringhaus Prize. His etchings are owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Library of Congress, and the New York Public Library. (He thought they might be stashed away in those august attics, with the spiders their only critics.)

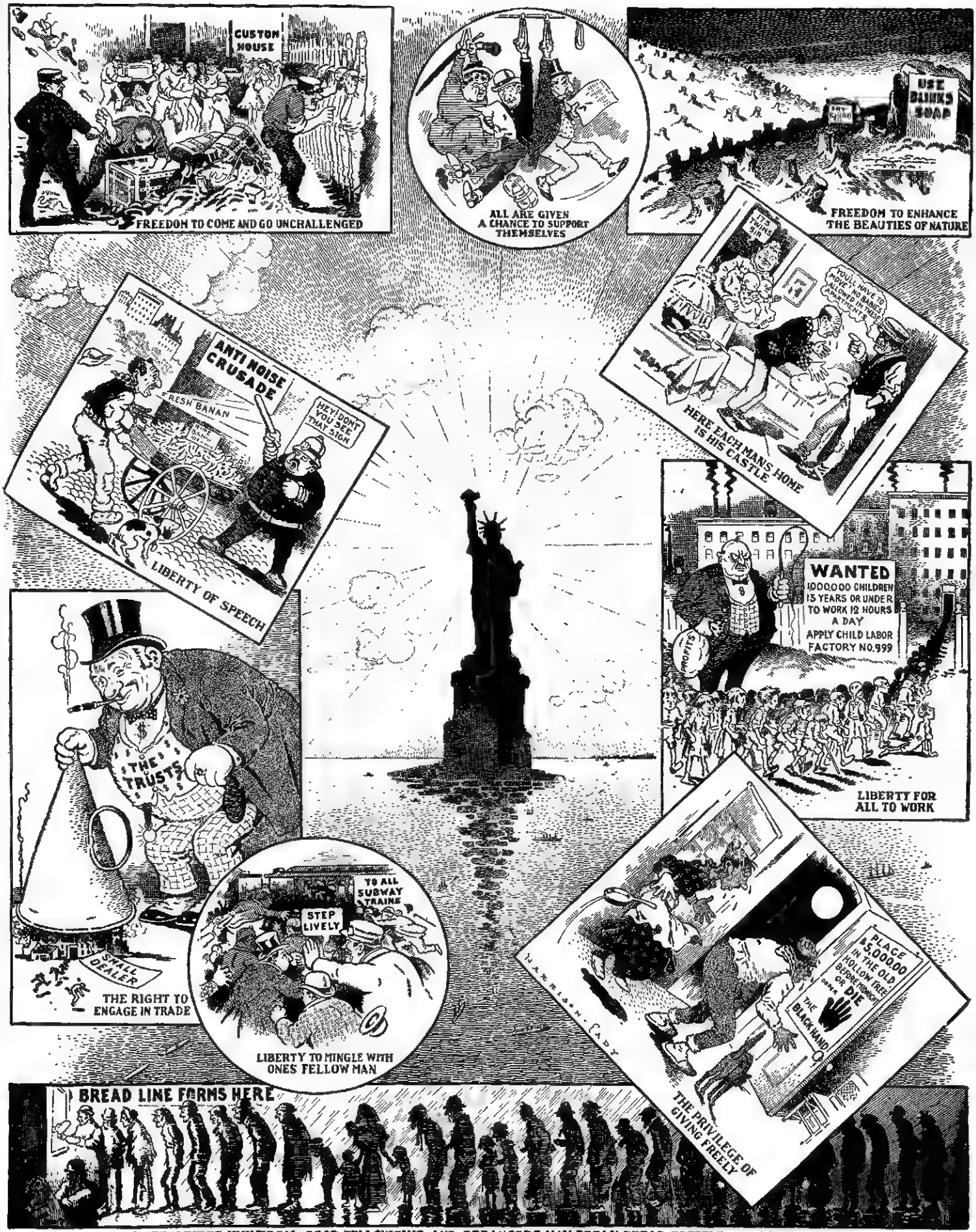
HARRISON · CADY·

Wilhelm: I'M TIRED OF THIS HORRIBLE WAR.

"THEN COME WITH ME AND REST WHERE THE OTHERS ARE RESTING."

BELOW: The type of illustration Cady is best remembered for. From *Baby Possum's Queer Voyage*, 1927.




CUSTOM HOUSE
FREEDOM TO COME AND GO UNCHALLENGED
ALL ARE GIVEN A CHANCE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES
USE DAINTY SOAP
FREEDOM TO ENHANCE THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE
ANTI NOISE CRUSADE
FRESH BANAN
HEY! DON'T YOU SEE THAT SIGN
LIBERTY OF SPEECH
HERE EACH MANS HOME IS HIS CASTLE
WANTED
1000000 CHILDREN 13 YEARS OR UNDER TO WORK 12 HOURS A DAY
APPLY CHILD LABOR FACTORY NO.999
LIBERTY FOR ALL TO WORK
THE TRUSTS
SMALL DEALER
THE RIGHT TO ENGAGE IN TRADE
TO ALL SUBWAY TRAINS
STEP LIVELY
LIBERTY TO MINGLE WITH ONES FELLOW MAN
HARLEM CAR
PLACE $5,000.00 IN THE OLD HOLLOW TREE BEFORE MIDNIGHT OR DIE
THE BLACK HAND
THE PRIVILEGE OF GIVING FREELY
BREAD LINE FORMS HERE

HERE ABIDES UNIVERSAL GOOD FELLOWSHIP; AND STRANGERS MAY BREAK BREAD TOGETHER IN PERFECT EQUALITY.

THEY MAY HAVE KINGS AND QUEENS IN ENGLAND BUT IN THIS COUNTRY WE HAVE MADE LIBERTY OUR QUEEN

LOVERS OF NATURE

CIVILIZED AND SAVAGE

IN THE PATH OF PROGRESS

TO-DAY

REFLECTIONS OF A GREAT CITY

Between two worlds, life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn upon the horizon verge.
How little do we know that which we are!
How less, what we may be!

[From CADY, page 37]

of slum life; by the Naturalists' pathetic urban short stories; by the vivid exposés of the metropolitan press; by the detailed, scholarly reports of scandal and injustice in the monthlies (by reformers and muckrakers alike); by a new generation of politicians.

...and, in its small but rather influential way, by *Life* Magazine. *Life* had wide circulation and prestige, and was the most visibly liberal of the three major humor/cartoon weeklies. It was violently anti-war during the Cuban campaign, and Mitchell & company regularly crusaded for a variety of social and industrial reforms. Although it fostered the singular policy of letting contributors voice their own, and often mutually contradictory, opinions through its pages, most of the contributors in the period under examination (1905-1915) were progressive and reformist in outlook.

Some were outright socialists, some were what in retrospect could arguably be termed nascent national-socialists, others felt a need to illuminate social ills. It is in this context that Cady's work must be viewed. His *Weltanschauung* gave way to *Weltschmerz*; the America of his vision had become one of money-grubbers, of selfish promoters, of thieving industrial lords, of sadistic child-labor barons, of cacophonous immigrants, of thrill-seeking youths. The line between the visionary reformer and the nostalgic nativist fuzzes indeed in Cady's work, and that which it represents in our examination, but it is the anomaly inherent in Jeffersonian democracy.

Nevertheless Cady's work in this vein was brutally brilliant. His concepts were delineated with crowquill pen but carried the weight of sledgehammers. The exacting detail of his drawings forced the viewer to enter the compositions: And every inch of the complicated cartoon was as devasting as the next.

And there were, indeed, many of those inches, for Cady's cartoons invariably run full-page or in double-spreads in *Life*. His originals must have been huge, given the scope, the detail, and the gallons of ink that must have been the ingredients! Cartoons often swarmed with hundreds of characters, scores of labels, and a variety of props, icons, and symbols. Even when the occasional cartoon was deemed to promote a point through simplicity, those unbelievable networks of crosshatched lines still combined to make the viewer marvel.

Learning of Cady's other sides—graphically and thematically—should of course serve not a bit to detract from the later, cozier, more familiar part of his career, just as the corollary would be absurd. Rather we learn that a unique American cartoonist has an entire 'nother side, made all the more intriguing by the contrast within his entire output. The cartoons on these pages have not seen public exposure since their original publication at the turn of the century. Many of their messages are still compelling; the penwork is forever awe-inspiring; and similar cartoons by their creator, Harrison Cady, cry out for fuller exposure and appreciation. —*Rick Marschall*

A Forgotten Western Classic:

No doubt: Warren's *Lance* was his best strip work ever, topping his previous *Casey Ruggles* which, for a few months in 1950, I'd helped him produce.

After syndicate woes with *Casey*, he was determined to own and thus control and profit from his next endeavor. The self-syndication of *Lance* created woes of many another sort...costly ones, for Warren employed members of his family to crisscross the U.S.A. selling the strip to newspaper editors while he tended production chores at home as well, and handled most of the mat-distribution and account books. A heavy grind.

Such that, upon a selling trip in the L.A. area, he phoned to invite me to join him for a drink and a chat at the nearby Hollywood-Roosevelt—our first meeting since we split during *Casey* and my leaving San Jose—and asked that I take over all art on *Lance*, for too-little money. I refused. Under contract to produce art for the Dell comic book line, my hands were tied. Too, he was doing a first-class job despite the press of business chores inherent in self-syndication—and I frankly thought that it'd be wrong for him to exit the art production, no matter who his ghost would be. So, he went on with all of it—and very smartly, too! A labor of dedication and love. It was his very own!

Warren, most of his fans may not know, cast himself (sans specs) as prototype for *Lance*—and if, as he'd hoped, and indeed was expected to believe, the strip would be adapted to either movie or TV series, he'd have delineated the lead role, moustache and all!

Promises were broken, thus all was for nought—but Warren, ever the thespian, possessor of a rich, dramatic, radio-trained voice, kept trying—until the end of *Lance* and even beyond. He just might've pulled it off—who knows?

Success, despite his variegated talents, seemed always to elude him throughout his professional career—true of most of us, truth be told—but he kept plugging!

When we met, it was I who had a job offer for him—which entreed Warren into animation art for TV—on the *Space Angel* series I art directed for Cambria Studios in 1961. But he snubbed the art job for awhile in lieu of a co-writing position there, and in the end doubled in brass doing some of both!

Later, ensconced at Hanna-Barbera, in '65, I put them in touch with Warren and he joined us Staff Layoutmen on Doug Wildey's *Jonny Quest* series, for which he also wrote and co-directed one memorable episode!

Re *Lance*: Warren's writing was excellent, with good, well-crafted dialogue and sound dramatic range—which his art matched in kind. Always authentic, historically—and more experimental, especially so in his Sunday color work.

I recall a visit to his San Jose studio in the late '50s with our mutual friend, Ralph Brune (a *SJPD* Officer) to find him doing an elaborate color separation of a full-page shot of the Grand Canyon with not an ink line to be seen in it—just color and tone! This just *had* to be a 'first' in comic strip history!

(Rick Marschall will/must clarify/confirm/or counter this presumptive postulation!)*

It was a knockout effect! Bloody hard work! with all his time-robbing problems producing *Lance* on his own hook, he *made* time to do this extremely complex color separation—out of love for the craft! And to boost the strip's quality and eye appeal! It was certainly unique: "different" from accepted norms abounding in Sunday comics, then—and would be *now*, in this age of faster, cheaper, never better!

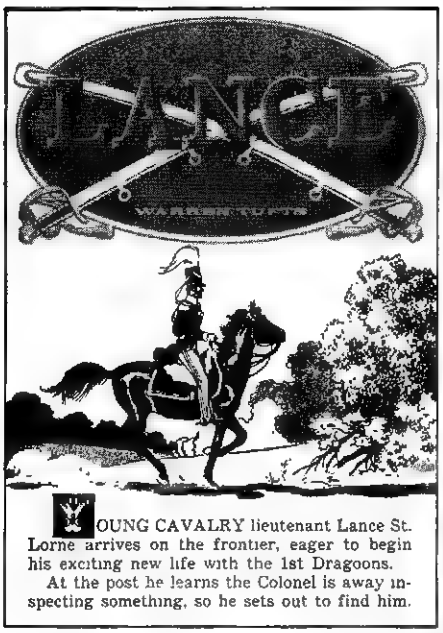
So look well at *Lance*—and at Tufts! There's much to admire, be surprised by, and to learn from! Warren was a paradox within an enigma—though he loved the craft, the art, the medium, twice, on both *Casey* (while I assisted and ghosted) and *Lance*, he asked me to take on all of the art, turn it to my style, so he'd be free to just write, manage, and promote them—and twice it couldn't/wouldn't work out!

He had a love/hate passion for the art of it, somehow! Perhaps just because of the time it took to do that part of the whole—I'm not sure!

However, his versatility in the medium was striking—for, remember, he's the man who turned all our heads a decade later by drawing *Pink Panther* comic books as if he'd done animation-style art all his life!

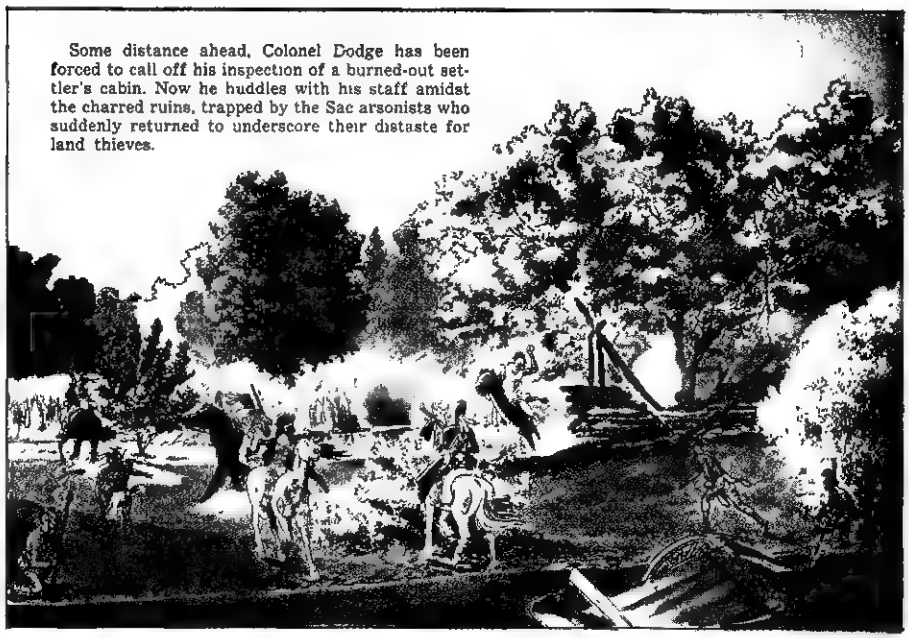
ALEX TOTH

**(Note by Rick Marschall: Alex is correct in assessing this unique effort by Tufts. At the turn of the century,* N.Y. World *engreavers converted background holding lines to blue to give the illusion of depth; but they were still pen-drawn. Also the* Chicago-Tribune *reproduced watercolors of* The Teenie Weenies *in its magazine section, but* Lance *was the only ROP letterpress comic strip to attempt such color effects as referred to here. By the way,* NEMO *is most proud to welcome the great Alex Toth to its family of readers and contributors. He is, of course, one of the profession's great native talents.)*



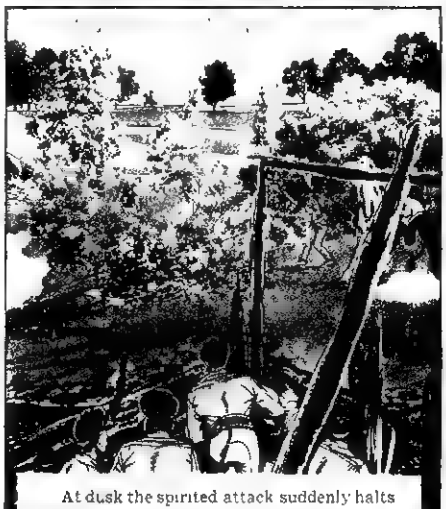
YOUNG CAVALRY lieutenant Lance St. Lorne arrives on the frontier, eager to begin his exciting new life with the 1st Dragoons.

At the post he learns the Colonel is away inspecting something, so he sets out to find him.



Some distance ahead, Colonel Dodge has been forced to call off his inspection of a burned-out settler's cabin. Now he huddles with his staff amidst the charred ruins, trapped by the Sac arsonists who suddenly returned to underscore their distaste for land thieves.

The Indians know better than to inflict serious damage to the Army brass, but a little fear should earn some much-needed respect. Their musket fire is wild but their accuracy with dirt clods is unerring!

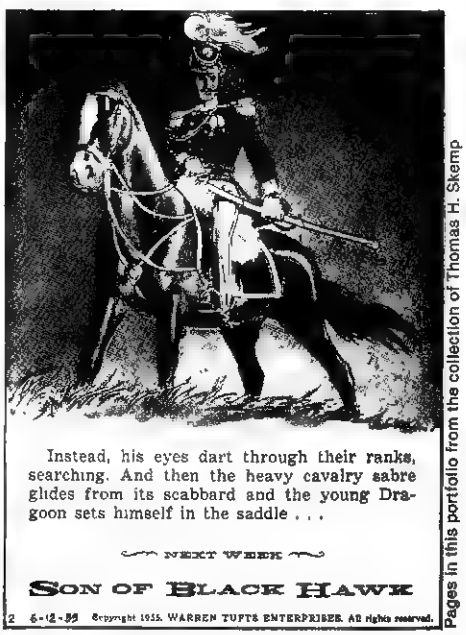


At dusk the spirited attack suddenly halts and the Indians jabber excitedly. A lone Dragoon has blundered onto the scene and presents a great temptation!

The officers, guessing the Indians' plan, try to shout a warning . . .

But Lance does not hear. He sits frozen in his saddle, scarcely believing his eyes: his Colonel and all his superior officers, alone, outnumbered, and surrounded by hostile Indians! It is a wonder they are still alive!

The next instant the Sacs plow into the river, yelping and howling with glee, and Lance sees his own future fading! He could easily turn tail and outdistance them, of course, and live to fight another day . . .



Instead, his eyes dart through their ranks, searching. And then the heavy cavalry sabre glides from its scabbard and the young Dragoon sets himself in the saddle . . .

NEXT WEEK

SON OF BLACK HAWK

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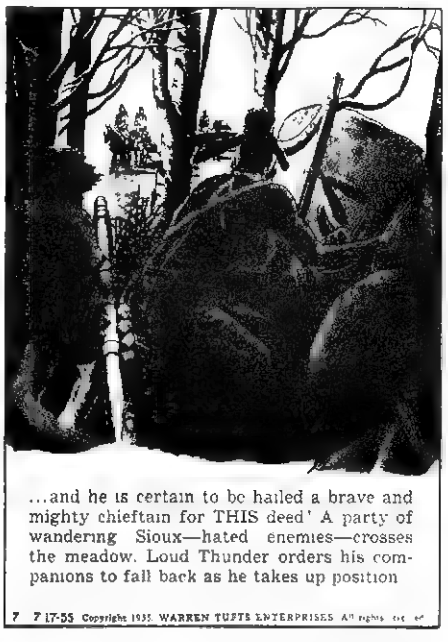
Pages in this portfolio from the collection of Thomas H. Skemp

FOR twelve hours running, Lance plods after Loud Thunder and his renegade Sacs . . .

Finally, the heat of the day forces a halt. Lance decides to rest out the afternoon, then press on during the night while the Indians camp

Meanwhile, far uptrail, Loud Thunder too calls a halt . . . but for a different reason! He needs followers for an uprising . .



. . . and he is certain to be hailed a brave and mighty chieftain for THIS deed! A party of wandering Sioux—hated enemies—crosses the meadow. Loud Thunder orders his companions to fall back as he takes up position

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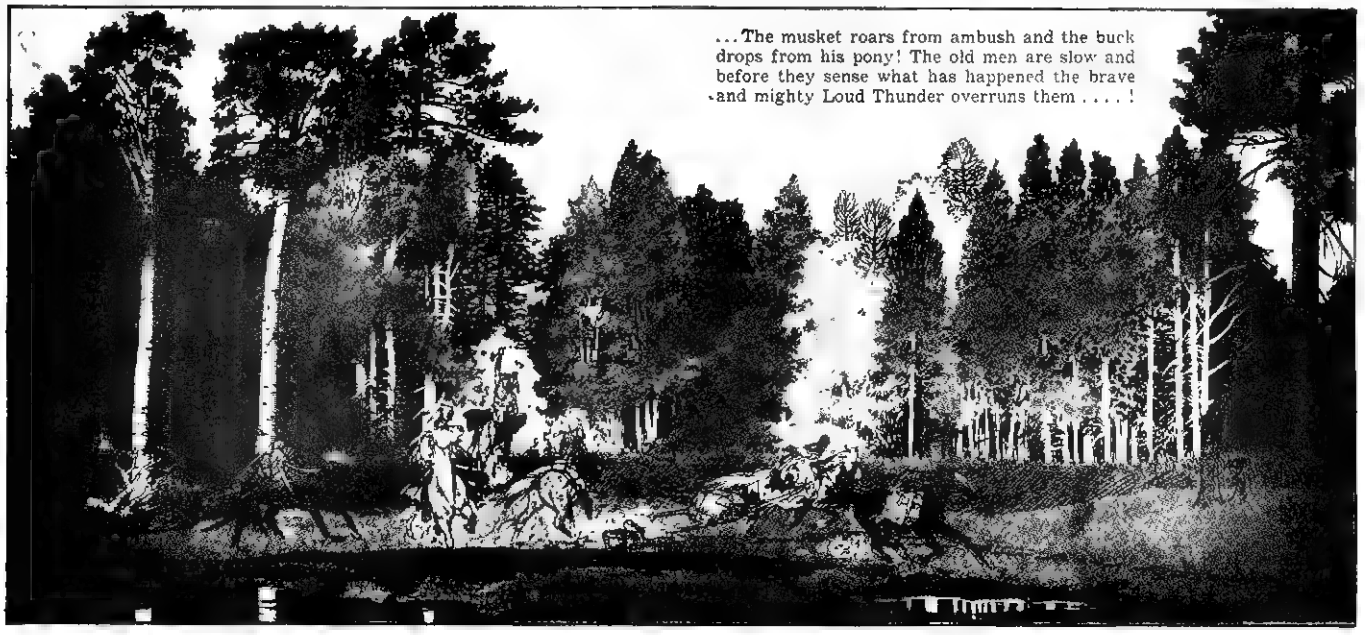
The party numbers four: two old men, a buck, and a young squaw



. . . The musket roars from ambush and the buck drops from his pony! The old men are slow and before they sense what has happened the brave and mighty Loud Thunder overruns them . . . . !

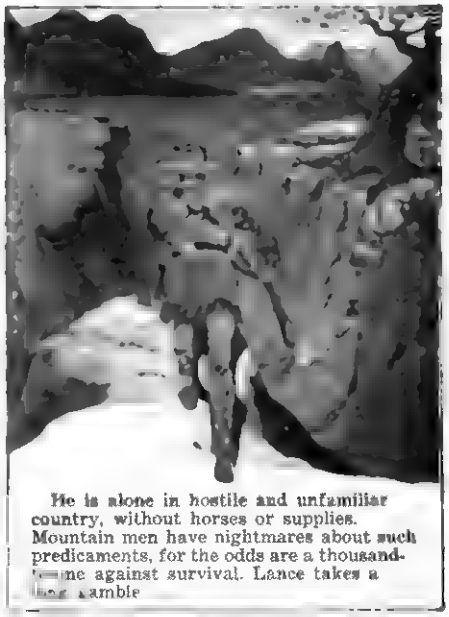
BLACKFOOT

Twelve hours have passed since the brush with the Blackfeet. Blaze and the Arapaho guide have failed to rendezvous

Fearing the worst, Lance retraces their escape route and two miles downriver comes across the lifeless form of his guide.

The body is secluded from varmints and Lance continues the vain search for Blaze.

At noon, thoroughly sick at heart, he gives up. And Lance's plight is desperate .



He is alone in hostile and unfamiliar country, without horses or supplies. Mountain men have nightmares about such predicaments, for the odds are a thousand-[illegible]ne against survival. Lance takes a [illegible] ramble

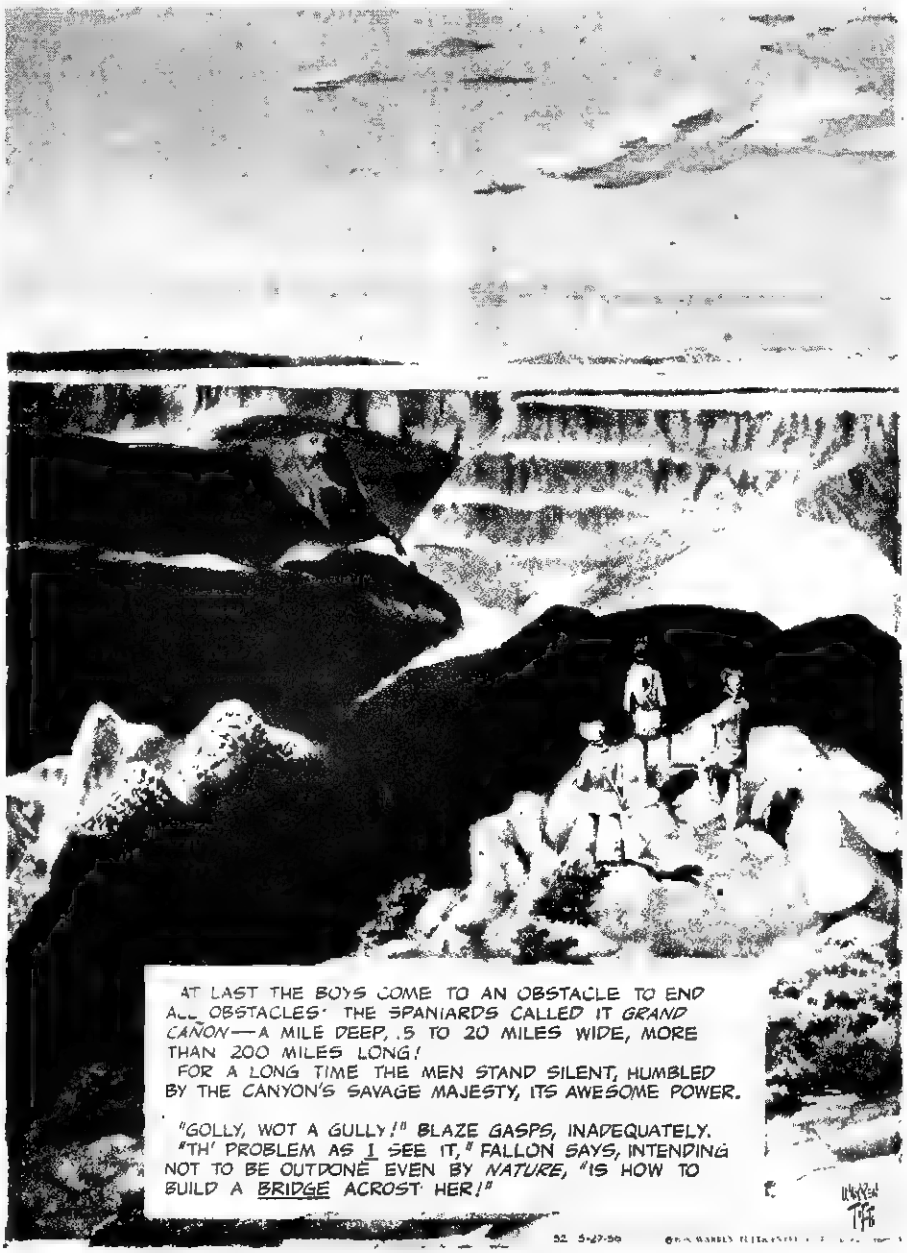
In the afternoon he picks up the trail of the Blackfeet who have his horses and tracks them 'til they camp at dusk.

Such a he must remain those [illegible]

LANCE
VALLEY OF THE GREAT SALT LAKE
DAY AFTER DAY, MILE AFTER TORTURING MILE, LANCE, BLAZE, AND BIG FALLON TRACK THE MOUNTAIN MAN'S STOLEN HORSES ....

THEY SWEAT BY DAY AND SHIVER BY NIGHT; WIND AND SAND GRATE THE EYES, WATER IS BRACKISH, GOOD FORAGE SCARCE ...

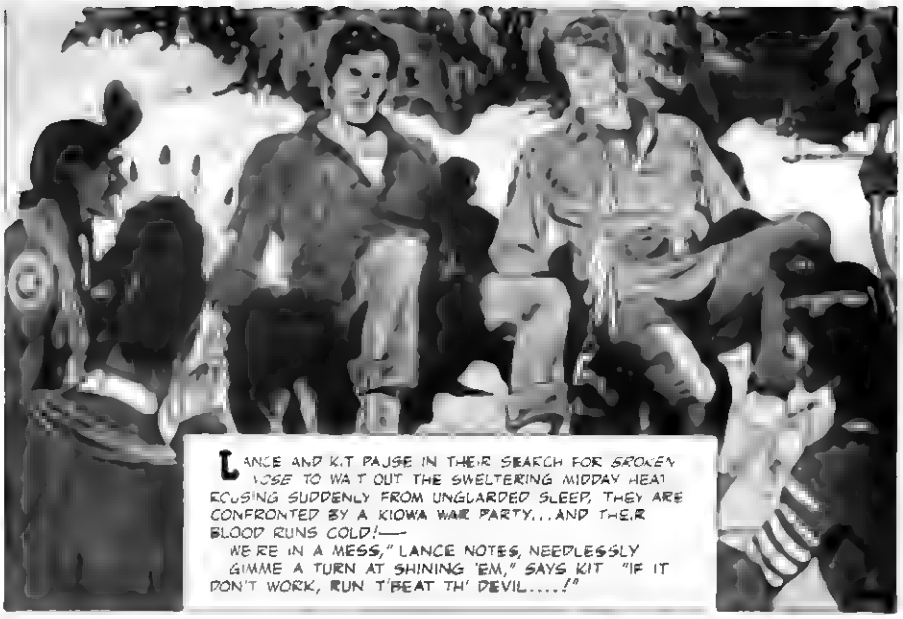
BUT THE MEN PRESS ON WITH ANIMAL DETERMINATION: NOTHING IS SO PRECIOUS AS A MAN'S HORSES AND HUMAN LIFE IS READILY STAKED IN ATTEMPTS TO RECOVER THEM.


AT LAST THE BOYS COME TO AN OBSTACLE TO END ALL OBSTACLES: THE SPANIARDS CALLED IT GRAND CAÑON—A MILE DEEP, 5 TO 20 MILES WIDE, MORE THAN 200 MILES LONG!
FOR A LONG TIME THE MEN STAND SILENT, HUMBLED BY THE CANYON'S SAVAGE MAJESTY, ITS AWESOME POWER.
"GOLLY, WOT A GULLY!" BLAZE GASPS, INADEQUATELY.
"TH' PROBLEM AS I SEE IT," FALLON SAYS, INTENDING NOT TO BE OUTDONE EVEN BY NATURE, "IS HOW TO BUILD A BRIDGE ACROST HER!"

LANCE
WARREN TOPPS
BIG FALLON LEAPED TO CLAIM A STOLEN HORSES FROM A BAND OF APACHES LOST HIS FOOTING ON A STEEP CANYON WALL AND PLUNGED TOWARD CERTAIN DOOM! BUT—
MIRACULOUSLY, THE BIG MOUNTAIN MAN REVERSES HIS FALL. HE HAULS HIS BATTERED HULK TO SAFETY.
AND THEY DID NOT STEAL THE HORSES BUT FOUND THEM WANDERING WITH THEIR POCKET LINES DRAGGING....THE RESULT OF SLOPPY HANDLING BY THEIR OWNER! BIG FALLON IS A JUST MAN AND DECIDES NOT TO PUNISH THE OUTLAWS.
THE BOYS ARE HAPPY TO REUNITE WITH THEIR LIVES AND FALLON STARTS THE LONG CLIMB TO REJOIN HIS FRIENDS.
THE FRIENDS, MEANWHILE, ARE ERECTING A MONUMENT TO HIS MEMORY. "THERE WON'T EVER BE ANOTHER LIKE HIM," BLAZE GRUNTS.....
"THAT'S GOOD! HE WAS A FOOL," LANCE SAYS SWEATING HARD. "ONLY A FOOL WOULD TRY TO RUN DOWN A CANYON WALL! AND ONLY A FOOL WOULD THINK HE COULD WADE INTO A WHOLE BAND OF APACHES FOR HIS HORSES AND COME OUT OF IT ALIVE!"
"THAT THAR'S A MOUGHTY PURTY PILE O' ROCK," FALLON OBSERVES CRITICALLY. "ARE I IN TIME FOR TH' PREACHIN'?"

LANCE

Plains Indian tipi



LANCE AND KIT PAUSE IN THEIR SEARCH FOR *BROKEN NOSE* TO WAIT OUT THE SWELTERING MIDDAY HEAT. ROUSING SUDDENLY FROM UNGUARDED SLEEP, THEY ARE CONFRONTED BY A KIOWA WAR PARTY...AND THEIR BLOOD RUNS COLD!—

WE'RE IN A MESS," LANCE NOTES, NEEDLESSLY.

GIMME A TURN AT SHINING 'EM," SAYS KIT. "IF IT DON'T WORK, RUN T'BEAT TH' DEVIL....!"

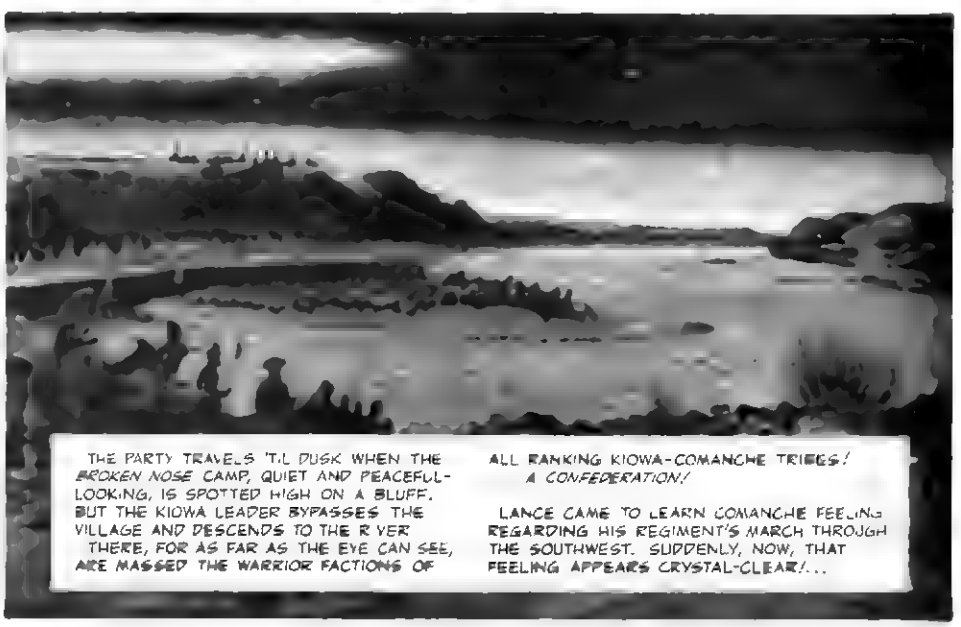
THE YOUTHS SIGNIFY THEIR WISH TO SPEAK WITH THE HEAD MAN. THE WARRIORS STEP ASIDE, THEN CLOSE BEHIND SO THERE CAN BE NO TRICKS...

CARSON MINCES NO WORDS: "WHITE BROTHERS FRIENDS OF *BROKEN NOSE*, POWERFUL CHIEF OF COMANCHE! THIS COMANCHE LAND! KIOWA NOT BELONG! YOU GO, WHITE BROTHERS NOT TELL *BROKEN NOSE!*"

THE KIOWA LEADER BEAMS AS T HAPPENS THE KIOWA ARE ON THEIR WAY TO *BROKEN NOSE*. THE KIOWA WILL BE HAPPY TO HAVE THE WHITE BROTHERS ACC[illegible]

AS THE BOYS MOUNT UP, KIT SEEMS WORRIED. "WHAT'S THE MATTER?" LANCE ASKS, "IT WORKED OUT FINE."

"YEH...IF *BROKEN NOSE* REMEMBERS ME....!"



THE PARTY TRAVELS 'TIL DUSK WHEN THE *BROKEN NOSE* CAMP, QUIET AND PEACEFUL-LOOKING, IS SPOTTED HIGH ON A BLUFF. BUT THE KIOWA LEADER BYPASSES THE VILLAGE AND DESCENDS TO THE RIVER.

THERE, FOR AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE, ARE MASSED THE WARRIOR FACTIONS OF ALL RANKING KIOWA-COMANCHE TRIBES! A CONFEDERATION!

LANCE CAME TO LEARN COMANCHE FEELING REGARDING HIS REGIMENT'S MARCH THROUGH THE SOUTHWEST. SUDDENLY, NOW, THAT FEELING APPEARS CRYSTAL-CLEAR!...

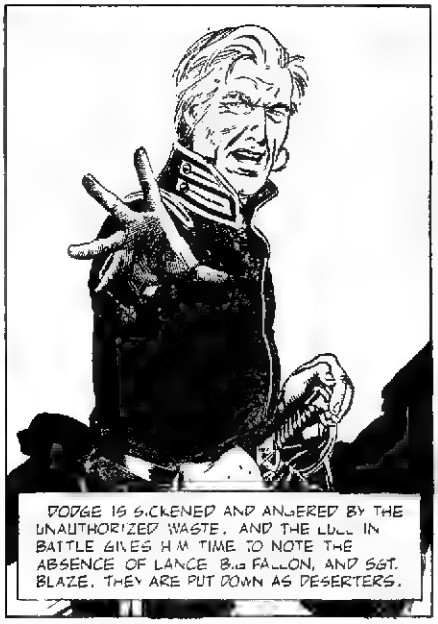
FOR LANCE AND KIT, THE CELEBRATING MEANS THE BEG NNING OF THE END. BUT THEY HAVE KNOWN IT WAS COM.NG—LATELY THEY HAVE BEEN COLLAPSING EARLY FROM THEIR DAILY BEATINGS IN ORDER TO CONSERVE STRENGTH FOR A FINAL GAMBLE...

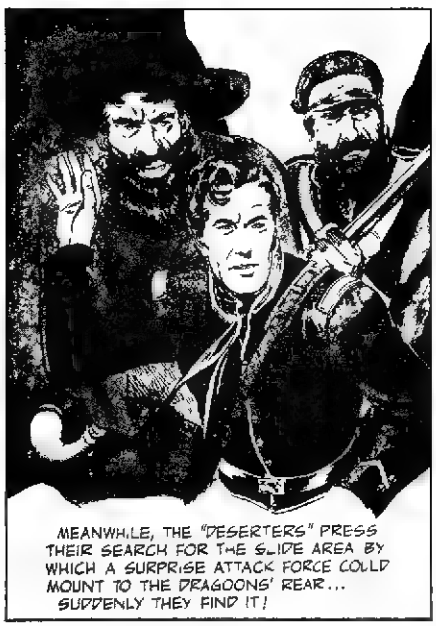
FREE AT LAST, THE YOUTHS RETURN THE LIFELESS BODY OF THE SENTRY TO ITS STATION OUTSIDE THE TIPI...THEN THEY SLIP INTO THE RIVER AND MAKE FOR THE SANDBAR WHERE THE PONIES ARE KEPT....

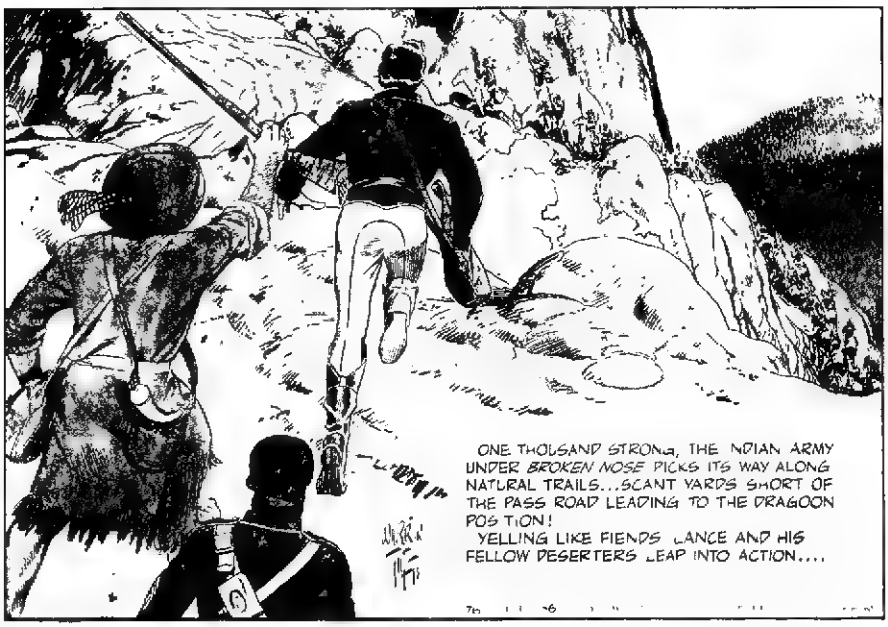
LANCE
THE BATTLE RAGES WITH THE KIOWA-COMANCHE THREATENING TO TAKE THE DEFENDERS BY SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS..
THE DRAGOON ARTILLERY MAKES THE DIFFERENCE. WILTING FROM THE MORALE-BUSTING BARRAGE, AND WITH NO RELIEF FROM A LOOKED-FOR ATTACK OF THE DEFENDERS' REAR, THE INDIANS ARE FORCED TO FALL BACK.....

IN HIS EXUBERANCE, AN UNTRIED OFFICER MISTAKES THE WITHDRAWAL FOR A ROUT, AND HE HASTENS TO "COMPLETE IT" WITH A MERE HANDFUL OF TROOPERS...

THE SMALL PARTY IS CUT DOWN IN SHORT ORDER.....


DODGE IS SICKENED AND ANGERED BY THE UNAUTHORIZED WASTE. AND THE LULL IN BATTLE GIVES HIM TIME TO NOTE THE ABSENCE OF LANCE BALLON, AND SGT. BLAZE. THEY ARE PUT DOWN AS DESERTERS.


MEANWHILE, THE "DESERTERS" PRESS THEIR SEARCH FOR THE SLIDE AREA BY WHICH A SURPRISE ATTACK FORCE COULD MOUNT TO THE DRAGOONS' REAR...
SUDDENLY THEY FIND IT!


ONE THOUSAND STRONG, THE INDIAN ARMY UNDER BROKEN NOSE PICKS ITS WAY ALONG NATURAL TRAILS...SCANT YARDS SHORT OF THE PASS ROAD LEADING TO THE DRAGOON POSITION!
YELLING LIKE FIENDS LANCE AND HIS FELLOW DESERTERS LEAP INTO ACTION....

LANCE

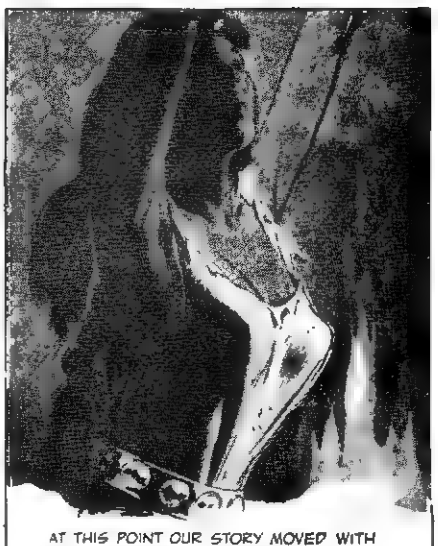
WARREN TUFTS

ANY MOUNTAIN MAN WORTH HIS SALT WILL TELL YOU: "TH' *SNAKES* MAKE TH' NEATEST, CLEANEST, PURTIEST, LOVINGEST, WORKINGEST FEMALE INJUNS, BAR NONE!"

LANCE DISCOVERED THIS NOT LONG AGO WHEN NEAR DEATH FROM A BLACKFOOT ARROW, THE PRETTY *MANY ROBES* ATTACHED HERSELF AS NURSE AND INSPIRED HIS RECOVERY.

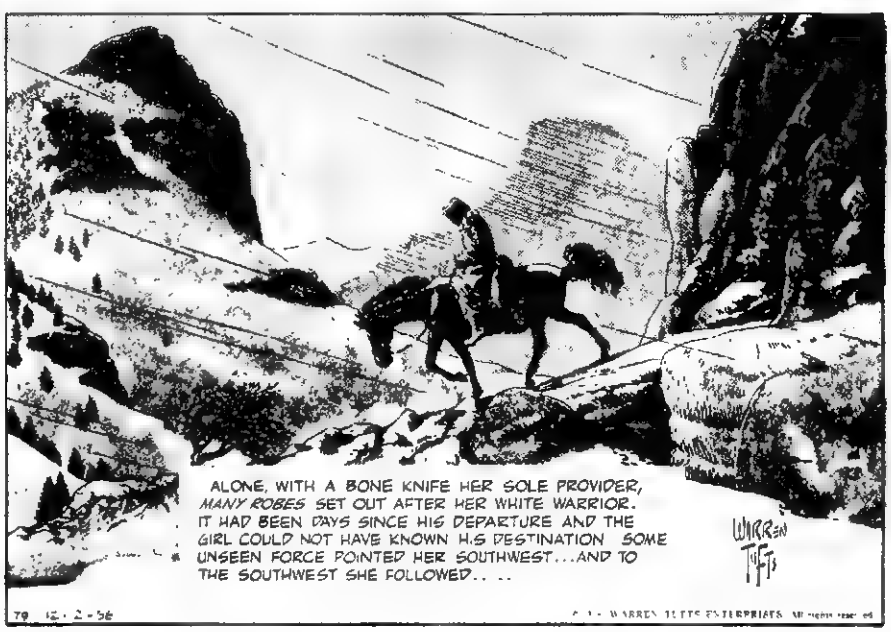
WHEN THE *LONG KNIFE* TOOK HIS OWN SWEET TIME RECOVERING, EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE AGREED THE COUPLE SOON WOULD RIDE OFF TOGETHER, AND THE UNION WOULD BE A HAPPY ONE...

BUT INSTEAD, LANCE RODE OFF WITH HIS COMPANIONS...AND *MANY ROBES* FLED INTO THE WILDS TO BE ALONE WITH HER GRIEF..



AT THIS POINT OUR STORY MOVED WITH LANCE INTO THE SOUTHWEST. MEANWHILE, *MANY ROBES* PLEADED WITH THE SPIRITS TO RETURN THE *LONG KNIFE*...

THE DISTRESSED GIRL MADE EVERY SACRIFICE KNOWN TO CUSTOM...AND AT LENGTH A GREAT SPIRIT CAME TO HER AND SAID, *"FOLLOW THIS MAN AND SHOW HIM YOUR HEART...AND THOUGH YOU ENDURE GREAT SUFFERING, IN THE END HE SHALL BE YOURS AND YOU SHALL BELONG TO HIM....."*



ALONE, WITH A BONE KNIFE HER SOLE PROVIDER, *MANY ROBES* SET OUT AFTER HER WHITE WARRIOR. IT HAD BEEN DAYS SINCE HIS DEPARTURE AND THE GIRL COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN HIS DESTINATION. SOME UNSEEN FORCE POINTED HER SOUTHWEST...AND TO THE SOUTHWEST SHE FOLLOWED.. ..

WARREN TUFTS

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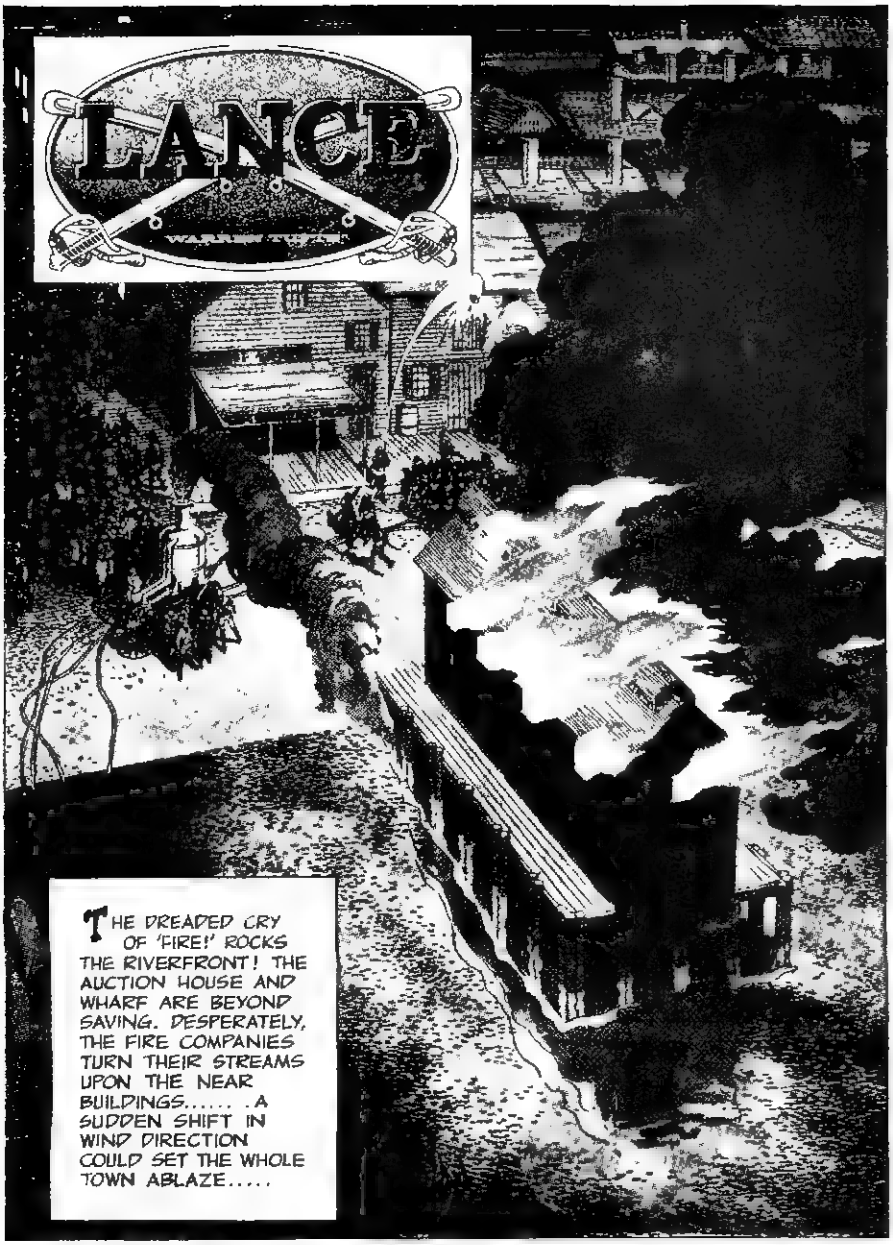
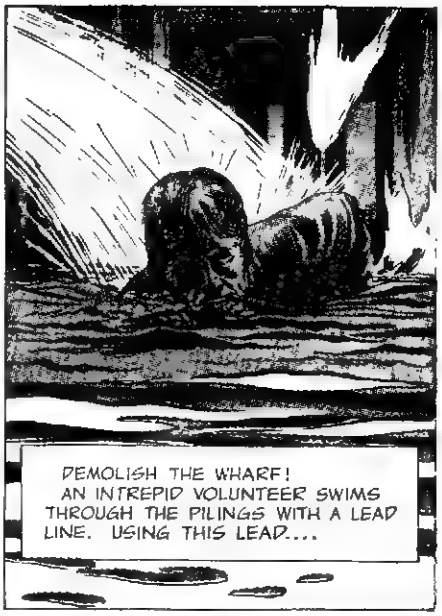
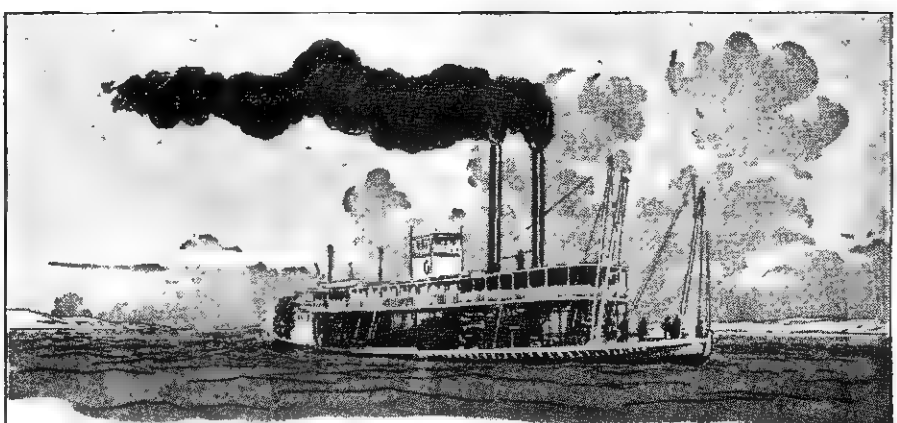
LANCE
YOU MAKE THE ARMY'S GREAT CHIEF MUCH ANGRY. ALREADY HE DOES NOT LIKE ME. GO...
THERE SHE GOES AGIN.
PORE LANCE!—TH' COLONEL SWARS HE'S GONNA BUST HIS RANK A NOTCH EVER'
ALL PRETTY FUNNY, LIEUTENANT—THEY COMPARE
TO STAY HOME!
I'M NOT LAUGHING! BUT SHE'S YOUR PROBLEM, MISTER—AND IF SHE TAGS YOU CLEAN TO THE MISSOURI AND CAMPS ON THE FORT GROUNDS, I PROMISE YOU YOU'LL SETTLE THIS THING BY MARRYING HER!
THEIR TIRED ANIMALS DRAG INTO WESTPORT LANDING AND THREE DAYS LATER THE 1ST DRAGOONS COME HOME BY STEAMBOAT. THE REGIMENTAL BAND STRIKES UP...POUSING CHEEKS FILL THE AIR...
MANY ROSES, HAVING COME OVERLAND BY PONY, WATCHES IT ALL FROM HER CAMPSITE ON THE GROUNDS OF THE FORT.....


LANCE
THE DREADED CRY OF 'FIRE!' ROCKS THE RIVERFRONT! THE AUCTION HOUSE AND WHARF ARE BEYOND SAVING. DESPERATELY, THE FIRE COMPANIES TURN THEIR STREAMS UPON THE NEAR BUILDINGS..... A SUDDEN SHIFT IN WIND DIRECTION COULD SET THE WHOLE TOWN ABLAZE.....


DEMOLISH THE WHARF! AN INTREPID VOLUNTEER SWIMS THROUGH THE PILINGS WITH A LEAD LINE. USING THIS LEAD....

...HEAVY SEA CHAIN IS FED UNDER THE WHARF, FORMING A HUGE LOOP AROUND KEY PILINGS, AND EACH END IS SECURED TO A BIG STEAMER.... A GRINDING CRASH!...AND THE BLAZING STRUCTURE DIES IN THE RIVER!

NEXT DAY, STANTON'S LIEUTENANT INSPECTS THE RUINS TO MAKE SURE VALLE DUFRAIN'S STORED TRADE GOODS WERE DESTROYED! HE MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY— "THERE WEREN'T ANY GOODS HERE, JACK!. THE PLACE WAS EMPTY!" STANTON REELS FROM THE SHOCK!


...AND INSTANTLY HE SEES HIMSELF THE VICTIM OF A MASTER RUSE! LANCE SAINT-LORNE IS CARRYING THROUGH WITH DUFRAIN'S DESIGNS ON THE MOUNTAIN TRADE! THE TRADE GOODS ARE EVEN NOW FAR TO THE NORTH, BOUND FOR THE FUR COUNTRY!
WARREN TUFTS
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LANCE
...AND GOD BLESSED THEM, AND GOD SAID UNTO THEM, BE FRUITFUL, AND MULTIPLY, AND REPLENISH THE EARTH, AND SUBDUE IT..
HEY, OPEN UP IN THAR! THEY'S A COUPLE RUNNERT US MOUNTAIN CHILLUN AS COME T'BUSS TH' BRIDE!
BETTER HIT FER TH' ESCAPE TUNNEL — EVER'THING'S WAITIN' FER Y'!
THANKS, OLD [illegible]! LET'S GO VALLE!
OOOO HOW EXCITING! I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD AN ESCAPE TUNNEL!
IT WAS DUG IN CASE OF INDIANS WITH TORCHES! QUICK, INTO THE BULL BOAT!
LANCE, THIS BOAT LEAKS! SOMEBODY CHOPPED A HOLE IN IT!
THOSE BUZZARDS KNEW WE'D USE THE TUNNEL — THEY DUG THE THING!
WELL, WE'D A M. [illegible]
—A LITTLE TIP! ON AN ISLAND ALL TO OURSELVES! OH, DARLING, THIS IS PARADISE!
IT IS NOW, SWEETHEART... WHEREVER YOU ARE IS PARADISE
MEANWHILE, ON THE PLAINS TO THE EAST, A PICKED COMPANY OF CRACK CAVALRY MOVES UNDER FORCED MARCH FOR THE TRAPPERS' RENDEZVOUS. THEY CALL THEMSELVES THE MOUNTED RANGERS. THEIR FEARLESS EXPLOITS WILL MAKE HISTORY.....
NEXT
Lance Saint-Larne, Colonel Commanding.

George Storm, Pioneer of the Adventure Strip

IF THEY EVER CATCH ME I'M A GONER!
WHERE'S THE CAR?
NOT SO LOUD!
QUIET NOW OR OUR BIRD'LL GET AWAY—
HE WON'T GET AWAY THIS TIME—
PHIL DARTED INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE SWAMP—IT WAS HIS ONLY CHANCE OF ESCAPE —

All art from the collection of Ron Goulart

by Ron Goulart

George Storm was a restless and somewhat elusive genius who seems never to have courted fame. When he died in 1976, his obituary didn't make the wire services and the notice that ran in his hometown paper in Oklahoma failed to mention most of his cartooning credits. Yet during a professional career that began before the First World War and continued for over a half century, he racked up an impressive list of achievements. Storm drew *Phil Hardy*, one of the first adventure strips, in the middle 1920s. He next created *Bobby Thatcher*, which by the early 1930s was one of the most popular strips in the country.

Entering the fastgrowing comic book business in the late 1930s, Storm worked for most of the major houses. Impressively versatile, he turned out everything from costumed superheroes to funny animals and was both the first artist to draw the avenging *Hangman* for MLJ and the first to do *Bugs Bunny* for Dell. The early 1940s found him taking over *The Adventures of Patsy* newspaper strip and also creating *Buzzy*, a teenage comic book character who competed successfully with *Archie*, for DC.

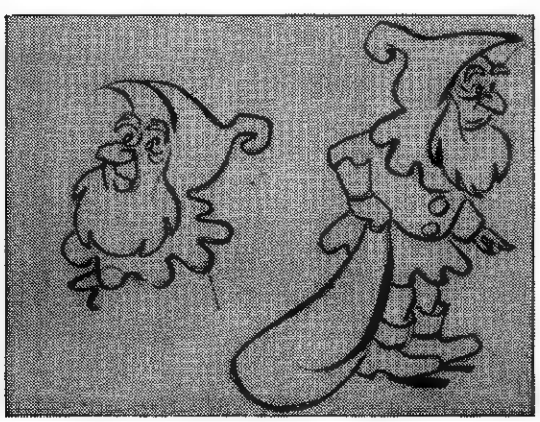
Despite all this, Storm remains little-known and facts about him and his work are difficult to come by. With the exception of a section in my own *The Adventurous Decade* and Bill Blackbeard's material in the *World Encyclopedia of Comics* and his Hyperion Press collection of Bobby Thatcher, you can't find so much as a mention of him in any of the histories of comics published in the past several decades. This article, based in part on newly unearthed material, is intended to detail Storm's accomplishments in comics and tell something about the life he led.

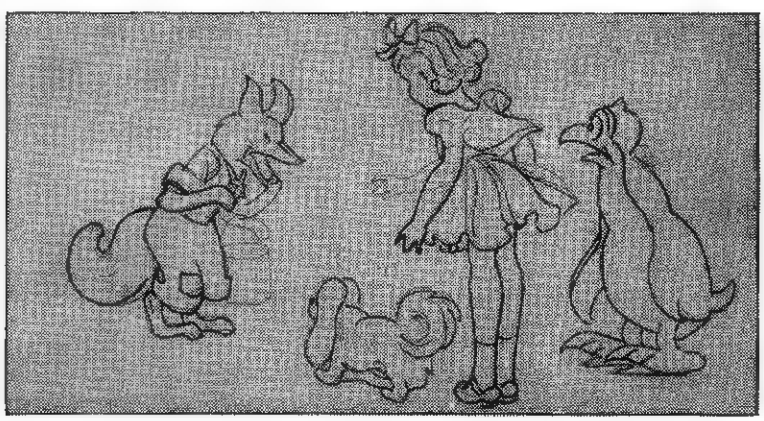
George Storm was born in a small town in Arkansas in 1893 and grew up in a small town in Oklahoma. By the time he was in his teens he was working for an Oklahoma weekly, but as a copy boy, not a cartoonist. He was employed for awhile as a file clerk on the SF & St. L Railway. "On the face of official reports concerning the annihilation of cows, there began to appear my sketches of Bossy hurtling over the telegraph wires with irate farmers and claim agents in the background," Storm later confessed. "The result was inevitable; art and commerce clashed." Out of a job, young Storm migrated to Chicago. "After a few months of art instruction . . . I began to make the rounds of the Chicago papers applying for a job. I was one of 500 with that ambition. John T. McCutcheon continued to hold his job against the field. Then followed two years of more or less precarious freelancing among trade publications, with intervals of employment in other fields."

Eventually Storm got a job as a reporter, at a salary of $8 per week, on the Chicago *Herald*.

ABOVE: Years before Buck Rogers flew or Tarzan swung, George Storm's dailies aimed for emotions other than laughs.

BELOW: Pages from the sketchbook of Storm, when he experimented with fantasy themes in *Patsy*.





When the *Herald* folded, Storm found work on other papers in the area. By 1919 he had headed West, working as a reporter for both the Los Angeles *Examiner* and the San Francisco *Chronicle*. "But the ambition to become a cartoonist remained with me and I aspired to become an editor and run my own cartoons on page one. . . The editor of the San Francisco *Daily News* recognized the strategy and gave me a job as a cartoonist in self-defense." After five years of drawing local cartoons for the *News*, the restless Storm journeyed East to work for the New York *Mirror*. This tabloid was Hearst's answer to the incredibly successful New York *News*. Storm had done a variety of cartoon work for newpapers by this time, one of his specialties being panel cartoons offering bird's eye views crowded with dozens of characters (*A Busy Day At Recreation Park, When A Snow Storm Hit Market St.*, etc.). For the *Mirror*, again imitating a format often used by his idol McCutcheon, he did a series of such panels under the title *Little Old New York in Pictures*.

In 1925 Storm encountered newspaperman and author Jay Jerome Williams. The result was a newspaper strip for the Bell Syndicate—*Phil Hardy*. This wasn't actually the very first adventure strip, since Roy Crane had staked a claim with *Wash Tubbs* the year before, but it was most certainly a pioneer in a category that would grow enormously in the following decade. Straighter in approach and more melodramatic than Crane's *opus*, *Phil Hardy* commenced in November of 1925. It was a mixture of the pluck-and-luck success stories favored by Horatio Alger and his dime novel imitators (this is no doubt the reason why Williams used the pen name Edwin Alger on the strip) and the more contemporary thrills and perils offered in action movies and serials.

"This is the story of Phil Hardy's climb to fame and fortune," announced the first strip, also pointing out that Phil, "a bright boy of 15," was the sole support of his widowed mother. The story gets off to a smalltown start, but before a month has passed Phil has been shanghailed and finds himself bound for Cape Town, South Africa, aboard the steamer *Black Castle*. From then on the strip was full of action, including murder, on the high seas and intrigue ashore. Before Storm quit the strip, in the fall of 1926, it had changed its name to *Bound to Win*. After Storm's departure a new young hero named Ben Webster took over.

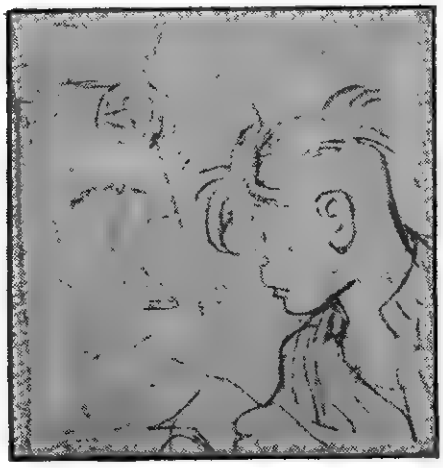
After leaving the Williams stable and before setting up in business with a boy adventurer of his own, George Storm did some short-run strips for the McClure Syndicate. The most notable of them was a 22-week adaptation of *Swiss Family Robinson*. Adaptations of the classics were common on the comics pages of the 1920s, but most were done in a stodgy, reverent way and looked like book illustrations strung together. Storm's handsomely drawn version of the Johann Wyss novel, however, was a true comic strip and had action, blood and thunder, and cliffhangers. The strip ended in March of 1927, with a shot of the rescued family sailing away across a moonlit sea, and was replaced by Storm's brand new *Bobby Thatcher*.

"Bobby Thatcher, a bright lad of 14, lives on a farm near the village of Lakeview. He is the ward of Jed Flint and lives with Flint and his housekeeper," Storm tells us by way of introduction. "Since the death of Mrs. Flint, who was kind to him, Bobby no longer attends school and his life is one of increasing hardship." Bobby's chief hardship is old Flint, as hard as his name implies. Flint overworks the boy, scorns his ambitions, appropriates any outside money he earns and in general behaves in the accepted fictional stepfather-guardian fashion. Bobby, of course, runs away before the strip is two weeks old. Storm now adds some contemporary touches. The boy hitches a ride from a stranger in a powerful touring car. The helpful stranger, it turns out, is wanted by the sheriff and the state troopers. A chase, including a race to beat a screaming locomotive to a grade crossing, ensues. What Storm is doing is mixing movie excitment with the Alger story line. He continued to do this throughout the strip's run, alternating babies left in wicker baskets on doorsteps with surly rumrunners blasting away with tommyguns. Bobby's picaresque wanderings through the 1920s and 1930s exposed him to almost every kind of adventure format—aviation, detective, cowboy, seafaring, etc.

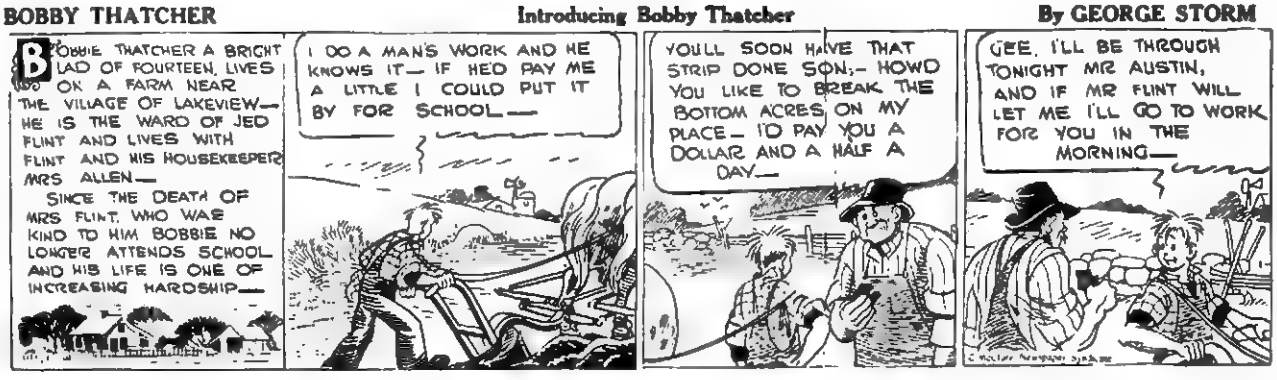
The strip ended, in the middle of a sequence, late in 1937, with a notice to the effect that Storm "has announced his abandonment of the strip to take up other work." Actually the

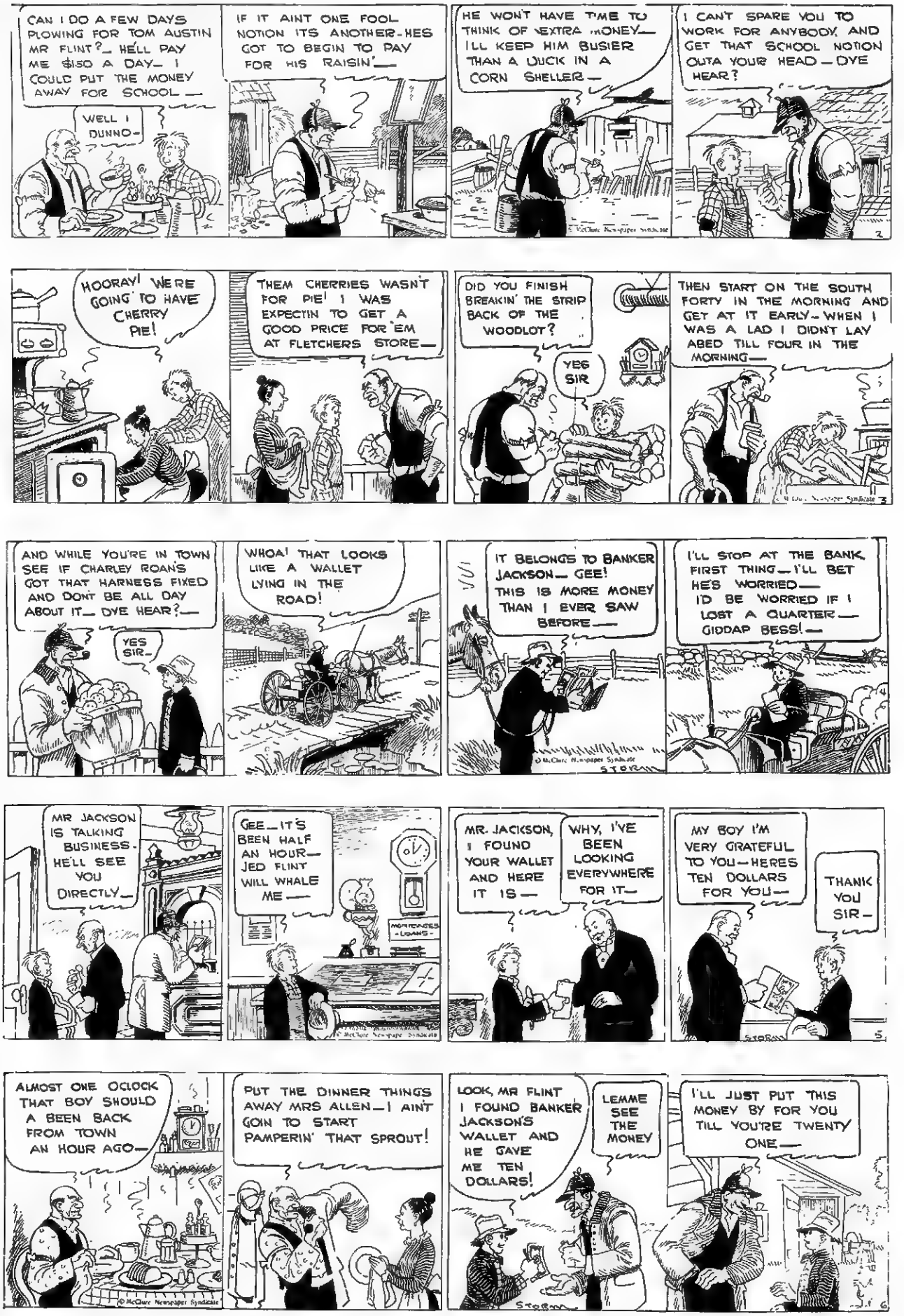
BELOW: Two sketchbook drawings from the *Bobby Thatcher* period, and the very first *Thatcher* daily strip, March 1927.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The remainder of the first week of this pioneer strip.



BOBBY THATCHER **Introducing Bobby Thatcher** **By GEORGE STORM**


BOBBIE THATCHER A BRIGHT LAD OF FOURTEEN, LIVES ON A FARM NEAR THE VILLAGE OF LAKEVIEW— HE IS THE WARD OF JED FLINT AND LIVES WITH FLINT AND HIS HOUSEKEEPER MRS ALLEN—
SINCE THE DEATH OF MRS FLINT, WHO WAS KIND TO HIM, BOBBIE NO LONGER ATTENDS SCHOOL AND HIS LIFE IS ONE OF INCREASING HARDSHIP—
I DO A MAN'S WORK AND HE KNOWS IT— IF HE'D PAY ME A LITTLE I COULD PUT IT BY FOR SCHOOL—
YOU'LL SOON HAVE THAT STRIP DONE SON;— HOW'D YOU LIKE TO BREAK THE BOTTOM ACRES ON MY PLACE— I'D PAY YOU A DOLLAR AND A HALF A DAY—
GEE, I'LL BE THROUGH TONIGHT MR AUSTIN, AND IF MR FLINT WILL LET ME I'LL GO TO WORK FOR YOU IN THE MORNING—

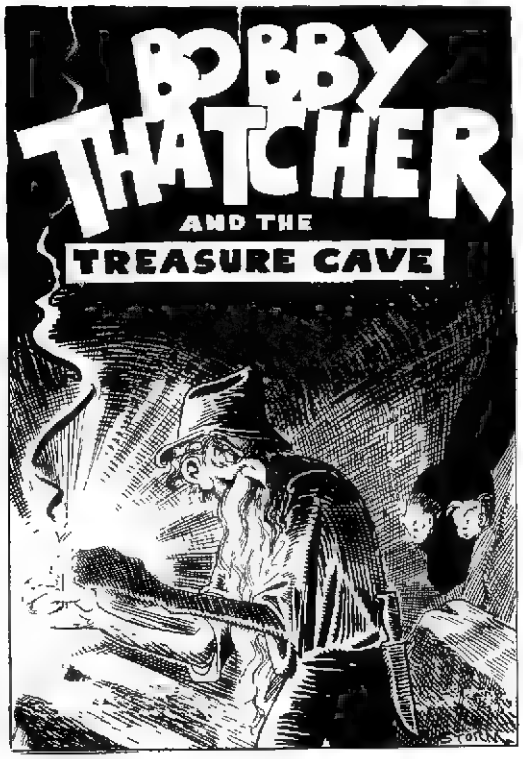

CAN I DO A FEW DAYS PLOWING FOR TOM AUSTIN MR FLINT?— HE'LL PAY ME $1.50 A DAY— I COULD PUT THE MONEY AWAY FOR SCHOOL—
WELL I DUNNO—
IF IT AIN'T ONE FOOL NOTION ITS ANOTHER—HES GOT TO BEGIN TO PAY FOR HIS RAISIN'—
HE WON'T HAVE TIME TO THINK OF EXTRA MONEY— I'LL KEEP HIM BUSIER THAN A LUCK IN A CORN SHELLER—
I CAN'T SPARE YOU TO WORK FOR ANYBODY AND GET THAT SCHOOL NOTION OUTA YOUR HEAD—DYE HEAR?
HOORAY! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE CHERRY PIE!
THEM CHERRIES WASN'T FOR PIE! I WAS EXPECTIN TO GET A GOOD PRICE FOR 'EM AT FLETCHERS STORE—
DID YOU FINISH BREAKIN' THE STRIP BACK OF THE WOODLOT?
YES SIR
THEN START ON THE SOUTH FORTY IN THE MORNING AND GET AT IT EARLY—WHEN I WAS A LAD I DIDN'T LAY ABED TILL FOUR IN THE MORNING—
AND WHILE YOU'RE IN TOWN SEE IF CHARLEY ROAN'S GOT THAT HARNESS FIXED AND DON'T BE ALL DAY ABOUT IT— DYE HEAR?—
YES SIR—
WHOA! THAT LOOKS LIKE A WALLET LYING IN THE ROAD!
IT BELONGS TO BANKER JACKSON— GEE! THIS IS MORE MONEY THAN I EVER SAW BEFORE—
I'LL STOP AT THE BANK, FIRST THING—I'LL BET HE'S WORRIED— I'D BE WORRIED IF I LOST A QUARTER— GIDDAP BESS!—
MR JACKSON IS TALKING BUSINESS. HE'LL SEE YOU DIRECTLY—
GEE—IT'S BEEN HALF AN HOUR— JED FLINT WILL WHALE ME—
MORTGAGES - LOANS -
MR. JACKSON, I FOUND YOUR WALLET AND HERE IT IS—
WHY, I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERYWHERE FOR IT—
MY BOY I'M VERY GRATEFUL TO YOU—HERES TEN DOLLARS FOR YOU—
THANK YOU SIR—
ALMOST ONE O'CLOCK THAT BOY SHOULD A BEEN BACK FROM TOWN AN HOUR AGO—
PUT THE DINNER THINGS AWAY MRS ALLEN—I AIN'T GOIN TO START PAMPERIN' THAT SPROUT!
LOOK, MR FLINT I FOUND BANKER JACKSON'S WALLET AND HE GAVE ME TEN DOLLARS!
LEMME SEE THE MONEY
I'LL JUST PUT THIS MONEY BY FOR YOU TILL YOU'RE TWENTY ONE—

George Storm, ca. 1930

last few weeks of *Bobby Thatcher* had been ghosted by young Sheldon Mayer, who was working at the syndicate as an all-around editorial assistant. "I think by that time it had become drudgery to him," Mayer recalls. The strip, tame in comparison with the new adventure strips that had gotten going in the '30s, was now earning Storm only about $100 a week. Not a bad salary for the time, but a long way from the $1000 and more per month Bobby had brought in his heyday when the strip ran in nearly 60 newspapers (including the New York *World*, the Washington *Post*, the Philadelphia *Ledger*, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, etc.). Apparently there was some thought given to continuing the strip with Mayer, but that didn't happen. Mayer remembers being told *Bobby Thatcher* had been cancelled while he still had two weeks of pencilled dailies to ink. Selling his Long Island home, Storm returned to Enid, Oklahoma, where he and his wife took up farming. Storm had gone back to his boyhood hometown, a place he couldn't seem to stay away from, and was absent from cartooning for nearly two years.

Comic books had come along in the middle '30s and by the end of the decade were on the verge of booming. It was this new industry that brought George Storm back into cartooning. His work first appeared early in 1939. It was a modest debut, with *All-American Comics* #1 devoting just three pages to reprints from his defunct *Bobby Thatcher*. *All-American* was the initial magazine in the new line that M.C. Gaines, formerly of the McClure Syndicate, was starting. It mixed original material (*Hop Harrigan*, *Scribbly*) with syndicate reprints (*Mutt & Jeff*, *Reg'lar Fellers*). The editor was none other than Sheldon Mayer and he was responsible for the reprinting of the strip. Bobby's adventures held on for only seven issues, though. When halfway superhero *Gary Concord the Ultra-Man* came along, Storm's plucky lad was dumped.

But it was also Mayer who hired Storm to do his first original work for comic books. The third new Gaines title was *Flash Comics*, which hit the stands nine months after *All-American* and *Movie Comics*. In the short interval between the launchings, Superman, and then Batman, had convinced quite a few publishers that costumed heroes were indeed a saleable commodity. *Flash Comics* boasted three of them, super and otherwise. They were *The Flash*, *Hawkman* and *The Whip*. Storm drew *The Whip*, with John Wentworth providing the script. Mayer sat in on the creation of the character and admits he may have been thinking of Zorro at the time. The hero of the feature, polo-playing playboy Rod Gaynor, assumed the role of the masked caballero El Castigo, initially to save a Mexican laborer from a lynch mob in a corrupt border town. Plots of this sort were, by the way, fairly common in adventure comic books of 40 and more years ago, even though editors and readers didn't yet talk much about social relevance.



RIGHT: The cover of a *Bobby Thatcher* reprint book.

BELOW: A strip from the "Treasure Cave" sequence, 1931.

Storm had a style entirely his own and it's next to impossible to find predecessors or, for that matter, latter-day disciples. His drawing is quirky, full of energy, and he often suggests more than he shows. Even when handling a fairly serious feature like *The Whip* Storm is clearly a cartoonist and not an illustrator. His anatomy may be a bit off, but the people, and the animals, all move and have life. He only did two episodes of the feature before moving on. The cover of *Flash* #4 is by Storm, but the drawing is actually a slightly doctored blowup of a panel from the initial *Whip* story.

The ubiquitous Storm next showed up in *Crash Comics* in the spring of 1940. This magazine, with its failure-prone title, lasted but five issues. Storm was in all five of them, along with such newcomers as Jack Kirby and Irwin Hasen. He drew two adventure features, *Buck Burke*, concerning a pith-helmeted explorer who "gets 'em alive," and *The Flying Trio*, about three "happy-go-lucky flying fools." For the even shorter-lived *Whirlwind Comics*, which survived for only three issues, he did a newsman feature titled *Scoop Hanlon*.

A JUNGLE OF NOXIOUS WEEDS SURROUNDED THE RAMBLING HOUSE ON THE BLUFF THAT HAD BEEN THE RENDEZVOUS OF JOHN MURRELL'S RIVER PIRATES LONG AGO..... THE ANCIENT STRUCTURE EMITTED A MUSTY ODOR OF DECAY AND SEEMED TO HESITATE ON THE BRINK OF UTTER RUIN.....
I WONDER IF YOU CAN HEAR THEM CHAINS CLANK IN THE DAY-TIME?
MAYBE WE BETTER KEEP PRETTY CLOSE TOGETHER
OH SHUT UP 'HANTS' AND SPIRITS NEVER COME OUT THIS TIME A DAY!! YOU OUGHTA KNOW THAT!
PA SAID THEY NEVER DID FIND THE TREASURE MURRELL H,D BUT FOLKS ALMOST TORE THIS HOUSE DOWN LOOKIN' FOR IT!

It was also in 1940 that Storm did his first artwork for the MLJ company. In the fourth issue of *Blue Ribbon Comics* (June, 1940) he drew *Ty-Gor*, a strip about a lad raised in the jungle by a maternal tiger. Storm dropped the strip after two issues, but returned to it again the following year. He worked briefly in newspaper comics in the fall of 1940, when he ghosted a few weeks of *Joe Jinks* for United Features after the death of Harry Homan.

Back with MLJ in 1941, he drew two boxing strips, *Kayo Ward* and the *St. Louis Kid*, and also co-created *The Hangman*. Scripted by one Cliff Campbell, this was an exceptionally violent feature. The Hangman sets up shop after his brother, the Comet, is killed by gangsters. A vindictive fellow, Hangman avenges his brother's death and warns us all in the final panel, "The Comet has died, but his spirit lives on...in The Hangman! Beware, criminals, you cannot outrun your own conscience...nor escape the gallows!" Subsequent episodes dealt with impaling, strangling, and, to be sure, hanging. Storm stuck with this one for just four episodes.

Fresh from *Hangman*, Storm went to work for Dell and drew *Bugs Bunny* in the newly launched *Looney Tunes & Merrie Melodies*. In addition to the exploits of the Warner rabbit, he also did *Pat, Patsy & Pete*. This was a fantasy, one that Storm obviously had fun working on, about a pair of blond kids and a talking penguin. Storm did this for six issues, creating undersea sequences rich with mermaids, monsters, buried treasure, and leering ghost pirates. One of the later artists to draw this strip was Walt Kelly.

Storm was one of the few artists to do both big foot and straight stuff. Jack Cole was another, but most cartoonists stuck to one style of drawing. You weren't likely to find Walt Kelly whipping up an episode of the *Human Torch* and Jack Kirby never did *Little Lulu*.

For the remainder of his comic book career Storm stuck with funny stuff. He produced numerous one-page fillers, most of them unsigned, for DC and Fawcett. And for Fawcett he also did a minor classic, *Colonel Porterhouse*. The colonel was a plump, bald fellow of the Major Hoople variety, who loved to tell tall tales. What made the five yarns he spun in *Whiz Comics* in 1942 especially entertaining is that they were parodies of the magazine's more sobersided heroes. Storm kidded Spy Smasher, the Golden Arrow, Ibis the Invincible, Lance O'Casey, and Captain Marvel in his six-page scenarios. Porterhouse with his potbelly and tomato nose made an especially fetching Captain Marvel.

Late in 1943 Storm came up with *Buzzy* for DC's *All Funny*. This comic book, initially a quarterly, also gave employment to such other veterans as Jack Farr, Paul Fung, Ray McGill, and Jimmy Thompson. Buzzy didn't seem like any teenager his young readers might have known. He wore a suit and tie, for one thing, and drove around in an ancient auto with wisecracks lettered on its sides. Buzzy, a peabrained fellow who played jive trumpet, was closer in may ways to the Harold Teen of a decade or so before than he was to contemporary youths, but it didn't seem to matter. Kids liked him. In the fall of 1944 a *Buzzy* magazine appeared. Storm did the covers and most of the contents for the first few issues, then just the covers for the next few. The title itself continued on to 1958 with different artists.

The last comic strip Storm worked on was *The Adventures of Patsy*, which he took over in December of 1942 and stayed with until April of 1944. Syndicated by the Associated Press, the feature had started in 1935 and Storm was the third (or technically fourth) to depict the escapades of the darkhaired, adventure-prone moppet; Mel Graff had created *Patsy* and when he graduated to King Features and *Secret Agent X-9*, Charles Raab succeeded him. Raab was a friend and former assistant of Milton Caniff and a friend of Noel Sickles as well. During his two-year tenure on *Patsy* Raab was able to persuade Sickles to lend a hand and even ghost on occasion. Initially the strip had a fairy-tale flavor, but Graff, realizing newspaper editors and readers weren't enthusiastic, changed it to a contemporary action-and-suspense strip. In the late '30s he transported Patsy to Hollywood, where she soon became a movie star of the Shirley Temple sort. Raab didn't tamper with the format.

Storm, making no attempt to imitate his predecessors, drew *Patsy* in his own style. He kept the kid in Hollywood, but soon introduced a long fantasy sequence involving witches, warlocks, and talking animals; all these elements were supposed to be of the movie the little actress was making. After that, Patsy—like many a fullgrown actress—is told she's been working too hard and must take a restful vacation. This device allowed Storm to get Patsy into the rural milieu he was so fond of returning to in his work...and in his life. AP was apparently enthusiastic about this move and sent out material promoting the new story

TY-GOR LEADS THE TIGERS TOWARD THE VILLAGE OF THE GAFOUBAS.... HIS FIRST GREAT ADVENTURE!!
THE NATIVES FLEE IN TERROR!
TY-GOR RECOGNIZES JUNTA'S SLAYER BY HIS FEATHERED SPEAR.....
TY-GOR'S SPEAR DRIVES HOME..
TY-GOR HAS AVENGED THE DEATH OF JUNTO!!
TY-GOR! TY-GOR!
MORE ADVENTURES OF TY-GOR, SON OF THE TIGER, IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF Blue Ribbon Comics

The concluding page from the origin story of *Ty-Gor* in *Blue Ribbon Comics*, 1940.

WE CAN TAKE OUR TREASURE MAP WHERE WE CAN SEE BETTER... AN' I'LL BE GLAD TO BE OUTA THIS SCARY OL' HOUSE!
WE'LL TAKE A LOOK AROUND... WE'LL BE TOO BUSY DIGGING TREASURE TO COME BACK!!
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING, ANDREW? ----I THOUGHT I HEARD FOOTSTEPS! SHH-HH...
THEY'RE WALKING TOWARD THE STAIRS... WE BETTER HIDE!
6-18
PAUSING TO EXPLORE THE OLD HOUSE, PATSY AND ANDREW HEAR STEALTHY FOOTSTEPS ON THE FLOOR ABOVE
SHH-HH
HE'S MUMBLING TO HIM-SELF--- LIKE HE ALWAYS DOES!!
THOUGHT I HEERD A CLATTER --- TAINT HEALTHY T'BE SPYIN' ON CATFISH JOE!
6-19

Two strips from an adventure sequence of *Patsy* by Storm, 1943.

line. "EDITORS: Here you are! Samples of the comic strip that is running away with America's readers. George Storm's 'real' girl comic, PATSY. The sequence... illustrates Patsy's lively appeal for all the family."

Restless as usual, Storm left the strip after less than a year and a half. By the middle '40s he was also through with *Buzzy*. He went home again to Enid, Oklahoma and remained there for the rest of his life. He tried advertising, gag cartooning, and illustrating. Storm also attempted at least one more newspaper strip, about a teenager (*NEXT DOOR with Charley Harley* was the title), but that didn't sell. His last nationally seen work appeared in the early 1950s in a less than prestigious humor digest called *Charley Jones' Laugh Book*.

In 1977, the year after Storm died, Hyperion Press issued a book which reprinted a sampling of both *Phil Hardy* and *Bobby Thatcher*. Although that didn't start a boom of interest in his work, it did get it before the public again. And eventually George Storm may receive the attention he deserves. As he said back in the 1940s, when *Buzzy* brought him again into the public eye, "They say if you stick around long enough hoopskirts and derbies come back into style."

What Was the Income of Strip Cartoonists?

From Storm's scrapbooks is this accounting by Storm of his income from newspaper sales of *Bobby Thatcher* for September of 1929. It is a rare and revealing glimpse at what a reasonably successful strip artist earned in a month two generations ago. Presumably this represented Storm's share of syndicate receipts.

Philadelphia Ledger, Pa.	$140.00	Washington Post, D.C.	40.00	Tulsa World, Okla.	20.00
Cleveland News, Ohio	100.00	Chicago Post, Ill.	30.00	Hoquiam Washingtonian, Wash.	6.00
Buffalo Courier News, N.Y.	60.00	St. Louis Post Dispatch, Mo.	120.00	San Bernadino Sun, Ca.	4.00
Hagerstown Herald Mail, Md.	8.00	St. Paul Dispatch, Minn.	80.00	Monterey Peninsula Herald, Ca.	8.00
Oakland Tribune, Ca.	100.00	Los Angeles News, Ca.	80.00	Worcester Telegram, Mass.	32.00
Bridgeport Post, Conn.	20.00	Ft. William Times Journal, Canada	10.00	Atlanta Journal, Ga.	60.00
New Orleans Times-Picayune, La.	40.00	Toledo Blade, Ohio	40.00	Meridian Star, Miss.	7.50
Aurora Beacon News, Ill.	8.00	Richmond News Leader, Va.	20.00	Dallas Journal, Texas	30.00
Greensburg Tribune, Pa.	12.00	Richmond Palladium, Ind.	12.00	Hollywood News, Ca.	8.00
Springfield Leader, Pa.	6.00	Regina Leader, Canada	16.00	Burmingham News, Ala.	28.00
Long Beach Sun, Ca.	8.00	Muncie Evening Press, Ind.	6.00	Greenville News, S.C.	12.00
Cincinnati Times Star, Ohio	60.00	Lorain Journal, Ohio	4.00	Victoria Colonist, B.C., Canada	12.00
Jefferson City News, Mo.	8.00	Stratford Beacon Herald, Canada	12.00	Erie Times, Pa.	20.00
Dubuque American Tribune, Ia.	8.00	Vancouver Sun, Canada	25.00	Cherokee Times, Ia.	10.00
Peterson Call, N.J.	8.00	Bellingham Herald, Wash.	7.50	Natchez Democrat, Miss.	5.00
Portland Express, Me.	16.00	Portland Telegram, Ore.	40.00	Yakima Republic, Wash.	4.00
Hanover Record Herald, Pa.	4.00	Stockton Record, Ca.	12.00	Santa Ana Times, Ca.	8.00
New York World, N.Y.	300.00	Toronto Mail & Empire, Canada	48.00		
New Bedford Standard, Mass.	20.00	Waterloo Courier, Ia.	12.00		
New London Day, Conn.	10.00	El Paso Herald, Texas	8.00	TOTAL:	$1,833.00

[From SAUNDERS, page 32]

had a strong influence on me. English Comp classes were an eagerly anticipated experience. I tried out, and eventually won, a berth on the college newspaper, *The Bachelor*. In my senior year I became editor. This gave me an unchallenged outlet for both writing efforts and cartoons. Seeing one's work in print is an invaluable aid to a writer or artist and I took full advantage of the opportunity, never giving my own work a rejection slip.

In my enthusiasms, I may have given the impression that we in Wabash Comp classes were all destined to write professionally. Our instructors never fostered that dream. They knew from bitter experience that a submitted manuscript usually collects a thick bundle of rejection slips before it brings back a check, if, indeed, it ever does. They quoted Mark Twain on the gamble: "Write without pay until somebody offers pay. If nobody offers within three years the candidate may look upon this circumstance with the most explicit confidence as the sign that sawing wood is what he was intended for."

Political activity was a tradition at Wabash. Thomas R. Marshall, later a vice-president (best remembered, unfortunately, as the man who said what the country most needed was a good five-cent cigar) and Will Hays, "Mr. Republican", a postmaster general who became Hollywood's first movie czar, arbiting taste and taboos in movies, honed their skills on our campus.

The competition was between Greek letter fraternities, with shifting alliances among the groups battling for prizes from class offices to controlling positions on publications. I was not a fraternity member, partly because I could not afford the cost and partly because bids from fraternities were not forthcoming. Like Groucho Marx, "I wouldn't belong to any club that would have a jerk like me as a member." (Some years ago, my son David's fraternity, Phi Gamma Delta, did initiate me as a graduate member, an honor which I cherish highly.)

But as an undergraduate I envied the men who had been accepted and I chafed with secret resentment at their taking over campus power and prestige. One day I suddenly realized that unorganized students, the "Barbs" (from "barbarian"), far outnumbered the fraternity members. So I set about building a constituency.

It wasn't hard. Almost all Barbs shared my resentment at being shut out. I called a meeting, made a fiery speech and was chosen to lead an assault by the long-ignored outsiders. Through the clout of bloc voting, rather, I fear, than because of any special qualifications, I became president of the Student Council, editor of *The Bachelor*, and missed winning the presidency of the senior class by one vote—my own. My opponent was wiser in the ways of practical politics and voted for himself.

THE UNITED PRESS

My proficiency as a party boss did cost me one prize, however: a try for a Rhodes scholarship. The practice was for the Student Council to select a nominee to compete with others from the state. The faulty Rhodes committee reserved the right to veto, but this prerogative was seldom exercised. After considering a dozen seniors, the Council sent my name to the committee. As president, I did have the grace to abstain from voting. But as editor of *The Bachelor*, I gave the story page one position when I made up the paper on the day of decision.

Before going to press, I walked over to the campus to check out what I assumed would be a perfunctory endorsement. On the way I met the chairman of the faculty committee. He coughed, hesitated a long moment, then informed me that the committee had ruled me out and chosen Norman Littel, a junior.

"That's ridiculous!" I exploded. "He was eleventh choice in the Council voting!"

"We felt that your . . . ah . . . political influence might have been a determining factor," the bearer of bad news explained. And turning on his heel he strode away.

Future events proved the wisdom of the faculty decision. That year's selection for a Rhodes scholarship was David Lilienthal, later head of the Tennessee Valley Authority. I would almost certainly have lost to him. Norman Littel competed again the following year and won. During the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration he served in a high subcabinet position.

Fighting the establishment was an extra-curricular activity for which I had little time in my first years at Wabash. In addition to carrying a heavy schedule, I had to supplement the occasional small sums my parents were able to send me from a meager farm income. So, in addition to working in my uncle's harness shop, I beat rugs, shoveled snow and did any chore that would bring in a dollar, or more often, a quarter. But if I ever resented being poor, one experience in Uncle Joe's shop taught me that poverty is a matter of degree.

One section of the shop was a shoe store, offering footwear so cheap that the highest-priced pair in our stock cost less than a pair of Mexican sandals would today.

One evening a father and son came in to buy the latter some work shoes. I fitted the youth with a pair of $1.89 split-leather brogans. He was euphoric as he proudly surveyed them on his feet.

"I'll wear 'em," he announced. "You can burn the old ones." He pointed to the pair of scuffed horrors with gaping soles I gingerly held by their rotting laces.

The father shook his head. "Keep 'em," he said. "You can wear them to clean a vault someday."

In addition to some basics of business operation, I learned a great deal about offbeat theology and political philosophy in the harness shop. Uncle Joe was a freethinker in both fields. He and Aunt Til were regular attendants at the Methodist church, but his reading covered a wide range of religions. Members of splinter sects frequented the shop's workroom and lively debates were carried on daily above the roar of the stitching machine. A local attorney, disbarred for his radical fulminations in public, gave frequent dissertations on the superiority of socialism over free enterprise, pausing only to gulp swigs from the jug of cider hardening in the sink under a dripping faucet. I listened as I swept the oil-stained floor and stored mental notes for use in future writing.

It was during the months when I lived with my generous relatives that the most important encounter of my life occurred.

Two doors from their home lived a carpenter named Silas Long. He had four daughters, the youngest of which bore the name of a then-famous figure in the publishing world, Lois Long. We often passed on the street as she came home from high school, frequently accompanied by worshiping youth. I shared the obvious feeling of her escorts, for she was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. Her opinion of me, she has since admitted, was less flattering.

"I thought you were the weirdest-looking creature I had ever seen. Your hair grew low across your forehead, almost down to your eyebrows. On it was perched a 'rhynie' cap, that ridiculous little piece of green felt all freshmen at Wabash were compelled to wear. And when you passed me you stared at the ground as you stumbled by."

I have never changed my first judgment on her beauty. And she can no longer disparage my hairline, which has practic-

ally disappeared with the years. I will always bless the turn of fate which brought me to Whitlock Avenue in Crawfordsville, Indiana, for it was there that I met and fell instantly in love with Lois Long, "the wife of my youth", to borrow a line from General Lew Wallace, "who still abides with me."

In spite of my secret fantasies about my neighbor, I decided to move nearer to the campus and share a room with a fellow freshman I had met, Ellis Maxey. We found a "Rooms for Rent" sign on an ugly old house with peeling paint only a block from my classrooms.

The owner, a squat, fat baker, was sweating over a huge bubbling kettle of doughnuts when we interviewed him. he quoted a rent of $5 a week. "That includes your hot bath once a week, " he stipulated. We accepted and moved in to share the upstairs with other students.

The view from our window was slightly depressing. Across the street was a coffin factory. The site is now occupied by a motel, the General Lew Wallace Inn.

To make sure we did not exceed the ablutions limit, the hot water heater in the bathroom was wrapped in newspapers and bore a scrawled warning: "Out of Order". But a fellow-roomer soon suggested, "Let's remove the swaddling clothes." He ripped off the covering, tested the valves and got hot water. From that time on, we occasionally took as many as three baths a week.

By the end of my sophomore year I had run out of capital. Reluctantly, I dropped out of Wabash and gratefully accepted $75 a month to teach in the Thorntown schools. While working on the farm the following summer, I had letters from classmates describing the easy work and fat wages to be had by working in the Maxwell automobile plant in Newcastle, Indiana. "Tell the employment officer you've had experience as an inspector," they advised me. "You'll sit at a sort of desk and check salvage, using instruments on small bits of metal. No sweat."

I took the bus to Newcastle and sought out the factory employment office. I had dressed carefully, donning my best blue serge pants, a white shirt and blue polka-dot necktie. I wanted to make a good impression.

The man in charge of hiring spotted me in the crowded room. "Any experience?" "I've done inspection at Diamond Chain in Indianapolis," I lied. "I'd like to work in salvage." He jerked a thumb toward the door. "Follow me. I'll put you on, but we have no openings in salvage at the moment."

I found myself at a metal-covered workbench where numerous mystifying instruments were spread out. "Use these on the truck transmission cases coming down the line," he ordered. "I'd like to go to my room and change clothes," I demurred. "If you want the job, go to work right now," he replied and walked away.

By watching the man next to me, I learned the eleven different checks, using the gauges as required. It mean lifting a 60-pound chunk of cast iron 10 times. The cases kept coming. It was like scene from Chaplin's *Modern Times*, satirizing the assembly line. The room was stiflingly hot. But quitting time I hadn't a dry thread on me. My necktie had faded into my white shirt.

Next day, and for weeks afterward, I dressed for the job and even found it enjoyable. My neighbor at the bench was a professional artist who had found that brawn paid better than talent. We had pleasant conversations about our mutual interest. I have often recalled one of his remarks, an axiom to guide any artist. We were discussing realism. "When you draw a peach," he admonished me, taking one from his lunchpail, "Don't just draw a peach, draw *the* peach."

Eventually there was a response to my request for an inspector's job in salvage. I visualized a few weeks of using micrometer calipers on nuts and bolts. But when the foreman announced my transfer he took me outside, to view a small mountain of transmission cases I had rejected after inspection. "Go over these with a new set of tolerances," he ordered. "Some will be usable."

In later years, as I listened on radio to Jack Benny's famous Maxwell, I knew why his car was defective. It was equipped with one of my rejected transmission cases.

When school closed we were a nation at war and I had received one of those fateful greetings from Uncle Sam. Obeying an impulse strange for one who had never seen a body of water larger than a gravel pit, I decided to enlist in the navy.

At Municipal Pier in Chicago, there was a training school for ensigns and I went up to apply for admission. A yeoman filled out the required form and told me I stood an excellent chance of being accepted. Then he emptied a bucketful of yarn knots of various hues and told me to pick out the green ones. I spent a half-hour at putting aside those that looked green to me. When I had finished the yeoman tossed my admission form into the wastebasket. "You picked out every color *except* green" he announced. "We can't use a man who is color blind."

When I returned to Wabash that fall, I signed up for the S.A.T.C. The letters stood for Student Army Training Corps, but they were more often sneeringly translated: "Safe At The College," or "Stick Around Till Christmas," or given a highly obscene meaning. However, the Corps was designed to provide a pool from which candidates for officers' training were drawn before the war ended.

MISERABLE MOMENTS

An example of the short-lived, Clare Briggs-genre panel feature Saunders conceived for United Features Syndicate in the 1920s.

Jr.: Say, prof, I wonder if you can tell me where I stand in chances for Fi Betty Kappie?

Ph. D.: Sure, havva seat.

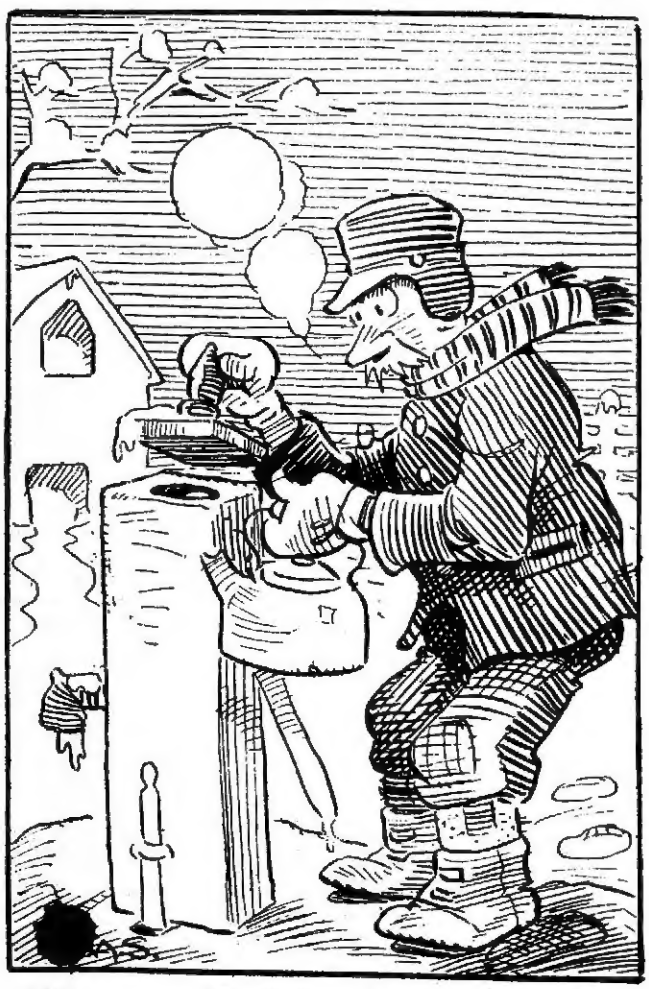
This was not to be. I was the worst of the rookies, habitually late to formations, awkward with a rifle and usually out of step in drill practice. But art paid off in briefly-worn sergeant's chevrons. Because I filled out the frequently required forms in neat lettering, an officer in charge promoted me to non-com status and put me to turning out legible forms for men with undecipherable handwriting, hardly a heroic role in the war effort to tell my grandchildren about one day.

I had many reasons to be happy when the Holland-born captain who served as commandant stomped through the barracks early one morning shouting: "Vake up! Vake up! Der var iss ofer!"

With military experience, however undistinguished, behind me, I needed a replacement for a private's pay and took a night-time job as doorman at a local theater. It was well adapted for a student's needs. Between customers I could study an open text-book on the slotted ticket-box. And I could watch movies until I had memorized the dialogue and squirreled away plot ideas for future use.

Saunders produced a panel of homespun philosophy in the mode of Abe Martin for the *Farm Journal*.

Sayings of Uncle Levi Zink



When my hired hand gets the radio ear-phones clamped on he can't hear anybody talkin'—not unless they happen to whisper "Dinner's ready!" The meanest man I know makes his wife break in his new shoes

My duties were varied. In addition to taking tickets, I posted bills and carried cans of movie reels to the railroad station to ship back to the distributors.

An occasional chore involved the theater manager. About once a week he imbibed too freely and insisted on vigorously leading the pit orchestra, shouting profane admonitions and knocking off his derby hat as he made swooping gestures with his arms. My assignment was to coax him to the door and send him home in one of the town's few taxis.

In my senior year, I found a job more in line with the life-plan I had by then mapped out. I became a reporter (who also wrote his own headlines) on the local daily, the *Crawfordsville Journal*. Cartooning was not neglected, however. I sold an occasional drawing with a "gag" that would literally gag one of today's comic artists. And I dipped a toe into the waters of professional chalk-talking. I joined a small group of students which barn-stormed the area giving a complete variety bill, taking money from a passed hat as our compensation.

The project was not rewarding in either case or pleasure. Looking back, I wonder why. The little company of entertainers we put together offered a diversified and reasonably diverting evening. We had a jazz pianist, a standup comedian with passable material, a youth of Scottish descent, Carleton Gauld, who strutted the stage in kilties doing a repertoire of Harry Lauder favorites. (Gauld later achieved success in grand opera, here and abroad). And our program included a double-barreled cartoon act.

Ralph Burroughs, a distant relative of mine, was a good artist. He was left-handed and we developed an act in which he drew from one side of the easel, I from the other, adding line-by-line to produce a completed sketch. I have never seen a similar professional or amateur act.

We booked dates in nearby towns and in a few instances could divide the free-will offering for enough to cover bus or interurban transportation. But after our performance in one village the hat came back from its rounds containing only grudgingly dropped pennies and nickels. So the tour, as for many a group of itinerant buskers, ended in bankruptcy.

It probably was fortunate. My grades were slipping and I had to burn midnight Mazdas to push my average back up.

I cannot keep my checking account balanced today and I was equally moronic in college mathematics. So the required course in calculus was a disaster. If it had not been for the patient help of one James Broxon, who was to become a physics professor at the University of Colorado, I would have flunked the course. When they handed out Phi Beta Kappa keys, Jimmy's was well deserved. I have always felt that he should wear two of those gold keys on his watchchain, his own and the one which for years I have kept hidden in my desk drawer.

Although I was an English major, I discovered in my early months as a freshman that Romance Languages were among my favorite and most easily passed subjects. This came to me as a bit of a surprise. in high school, only the forbearance of a fine teacher, Celine Neptune, kept me from failing the required Latin courses. I later tried to learn German and found myself so out of my depth that I gave up after a few weeks of struggling. But French, Spanish, and Italian somehow came easily. I even enjoyed a short course in Portuguese.

I took all the catalogue courses in French and upon graduation was offered a job as instructor by the head of the department, Clare Leavenworth. The decision to accept was not easy. I wanted more than anything else to enter the field of journalism where, I hoped, I could both write and draw. But Lois and I had reached apoint where we were discussing an early marriage and I was heavily in debt. The salary of $1500 a year was very attractive.

So, during commencement week, I packed my battered cardboard suitcase and prepared to take off for a summer of graduate study at the University of Chicago.

I chose that institution partly because it had a superb modern language faculty. But mostly, I suspect, because the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, where scores of the professional cartoonists I admired had been trained, offered evening classes. After all, a guy didn't have to study the teaching of French every night, did he?

Next Issue: *Allen Saunders recounts life in a town that produced a remarkable number of nationally famous cartoonists; his work for the national Anti-KKK magazine (and the threats he received therefor); and his first work for syndicates.*